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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government
Consultation – summary of responses

Draft Children’s Rights Scheme 2021

Arrangements for having due regard to the United Nations
Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and its Optional
Protocols when Welsh Ministers exercise any of their functions

June 2021

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Overview

This document outlines the responses received to the Welsh Government's consultation document on the 'Draft Children's Rights Scheme 2021'.

Section 2 of the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011 requires Welsh Ministers to publish a Children's Rights Scheme which sets out the arrangements Ministers have in place to have due regard to the UNCRC and its Optional Protocols.

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Additional copies

This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at www.wales.gov.uk/consultations

Related documents

- Children's Rights Scheme 2014¹;
- Draft Children's Rights Scheme 2021 Consultation²;
- Draft Children's Rights Scheme 2021 children and young people's consultation³; and
- Feedback from children and young people workshops Re:Cognition report.⁴

¹ [Children's Rights Scheme 2014](#)

² [Draft Children's Rights Scheme 2021 Consultation](#)

³ [Draft Children's Rights Scheme 2021 Children and Young People's Consultation](#)

⁴ [Feedback from children and young people workshops Re:Cognition report](#)

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1. Introduction

This report provides a summary of the responses to the consultation “Draft Children’s Rights Scheme 2021” (the Scheme).

The Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011 (the Measure), places a duty on Ministers to have due regard to the UNCRC and the Optional Protocols when developing or reviewing legislation and policy.

Section 2 of the Measure states that Ministers must make a Scheme to set out the arrangements they have in place to ensure they comply with this duty.

The existing Scheme was issued in 2014. This consultation sought views on remaking the Scheme for 2021.

This summary of responses document is split into three sections:

- The consultation responses to the draft Children’s Rights Scheme,
- The consultation responses to the children and young person friendly version of the Scheme; and
- Responses to the children and young people workshops.

This document does not include every comment but seeks to highlight recurring themes and issues.

The Welsh Government would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who responded to this consultation exercise and for volunteering their time to support us in progressing the children rights agenda in Wales.

2. Consultation process

Prior to public consultation

The Measure states that the Welsh Government must, when preparing any Scheme, new or revised:

- Involve children and young people;
- Involve the Children's Commissioner for Wales;
- Involve other persons or bodies as the Welsh Ministers consider appropriate;
- Consider any suggestions or recommendations made by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child following the State Party Report submitted by the UK Government; and
- Consider any other reports, suggestions, general recommendations or other documents published by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

In developing the draft Scheme 2021 Ministers ensured that consideration has been given to:

- Views of the Children Commissioner for Wales;
- Views of the Children's Rights Advisory Group;
- Views of children and young people
- Recommendations from the Children, Young People and Education Committee *Children's Rights in Wales* report⁵;
- Views on the 2018 – 2020 Compliance report⁶; and
- Feedback on progress towards the 2016 United Nations Concluding Observations report.

The consultation process

The consultation opened on 17 December 2020 and closed on 26 March 2021.

34 responses were received (24 responses to the consultation and 10 responses to the children and young people's version of the consultation).

We also commissioned a report from Re:Cognition who engaged virtually with children and young people⁷. The views of 84 children and young people from facilitated workshop sessions are summarised in this report.

A roundtable was held with children's rights stakeholders to discuss the consultation in January 2021.

⁵ [Recommendations from the Children, Young People and Education Committee Children's Rights in Wales report](#)

⁶ [2018-2020 Compliance Report](#)

⁷ Face to face meetings were unable to take place due to public health restrictions as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic.

3. Overview of responses

There were 24 written responses to the adult consultation. Two wished to remain anonymous. There were 10 written responses to the children and young people's version of the consultation. One wished to remain anonymous.

A full list of respondents can be found at Annex A.

Re:Cognition facilitated workshop discussions with 84 children and young people and worked with 23 organisations to provide one response report. We wish to pay particular thanks to Torfaen Youth Service, Race Council Cymru, Gwent Youth Councils and forums, Wrexham Youth Service, Children's Rights Carmarthenshire, disabled young people's group, young carers from across a number of local authority areas, LGBTQ+ youth groups and Gwent young apprentices for helping organise these workshop events.

An extensive amount of intelligence was provided on the draft Scheme and the proposed new arrangements. There were also comments on the children's rights agenda in Wales.

The Welsh Government would like to acknowledge and thank the many offers of support from stakeholders to work in partnership to develop the arrangements listed in the draft Scheme

A high level summary of key themes that arose across the three sets of responses are included below:

The following featured prominently in the responses to the consultation:

- Overall support of the draft Scheme moving towards an outcome focussed approach although stakeholders would welcome more detail on how those outcomes will be monitored;
- Overall support for the proposed new arrangements, including particular support for the training offer for Ministers, the awareness raising strategy and the manual for Welsh Government officials. However, stakeholders would welcome more detail on each of these new mechanisms;
- Calls for the Scheme to provide Wales specific and disaggregated data on children and young people; and
- Calls from children and young people for a greater emphasis on rights in the curriculum and better publicising of rights.

A number of stakeholders and partners across the sector also expressed:

- a willingness to work with the Welsh Government to develop a number of the arrangements listed in the consultation; and
- a desire to see children's rights reform that rises above the due regard standard.

4. Summary of consultation responses – adult version

All responses are quoted in their original language.

Question 1: Do you think that the arrangements set out in this revised Children’s Rights Scheme are sufficient to ensure that Welsh Ministers have due regard to the UNCRC and its Optional Protocols, when exercising any of their functions?

Yes Please tell us why:

No How do you think these arrangements could be strengthened?

11 respondents (46%) thought that the arrangements set out in the draft were sufficient to ensure that Welsh Ministers have due regard to the UNCRC, noting that Wales is already a world-leader in supporting children’s rights.

There was particular support for:

- the training of Ministers which enables them to give balanced consideration of the UNCRC as part of the due regard process,
- the proposed manual for officials
- awareness raising strategy,
- participation strategy,
- the evidence strategy; and
- the complaints process.

10 respondents (42%) believed that the arrangements set out in the draft 2021 Scheme were not sufficient. These respondents felt that the draft Scheme contained a lack of detail on the specifics of having due regard.

Five respondents suggested the Scheme does not go far enough to strengthen the UNCRC into domestic law, suggesting we follow Scotland’s example to full incorporation of the UNCRC. There was support from one respondent for the Welsh Government to ensure the equality and human rights legal framework is strengthened by improved access to justice, with a suggestion for a centralised, transparent, national mechanism for implementing, monitoring and reporting on progress and ensuring implementation of the Universal Periodic Review and treaty body recommendations.

3 respondents (12%) did not reply to this question.

A number of specific suggestions for improving the final Scheme were put forward and are included in the table below:

Themes to emerge
Role of Children’s branch/internal resource
More detail on the role of Children’s branch
A commitment to a central, well-resourced expert team to coordinate all matters relating to implementing the UNCRC across Welsh Government
Description of the structures in place to engage across the Welsh Government
Include robust processes to embed children’s rights in Welsh Government’s work
Role of the Manual for Welsh Government staff
A statement in the consultation summary about the intention to engage externally on the manual for officials
More detail in respect of the consultation and external engagement process to inform the content of the manual
Engagement of young people
The participation section could be strengthened with explicit recognition to the National Participation Standards
Strengthen the child friendly documents section by encouraging Welsh Government officials to produce a child friendly version of all documents where Welsh Government officials have determined that policy proposals/legislation will have an impact on children and young people
Strengthen the title for 7.1 by changing wording to better reflect the commitments set out in the section, and set out a commitment to engage with children and young people and stakeholders as the new complaints process is developed. Suggest ‘Making a Complaint’ or ‘Complaints process for children and young people’
Highlight the importance of hearing the views of children on matters that affect them. This will need to be worked into the participation strategy, and to consultation processes, CRIsAs and the evidence strategy, as well as the revised complaints procedure and Budget Improvement Plan
Outcomes
Using the Equality and Human Rights Commission human rights tracker training for Welsh Ministers and officials
The national outcomes for children and young people should correspond to national priorities identified by Welsh Government and others, including the Equality and Human Rights Commission using relevant evidence to identify the most significant children’s rights issues to be addressed
Training

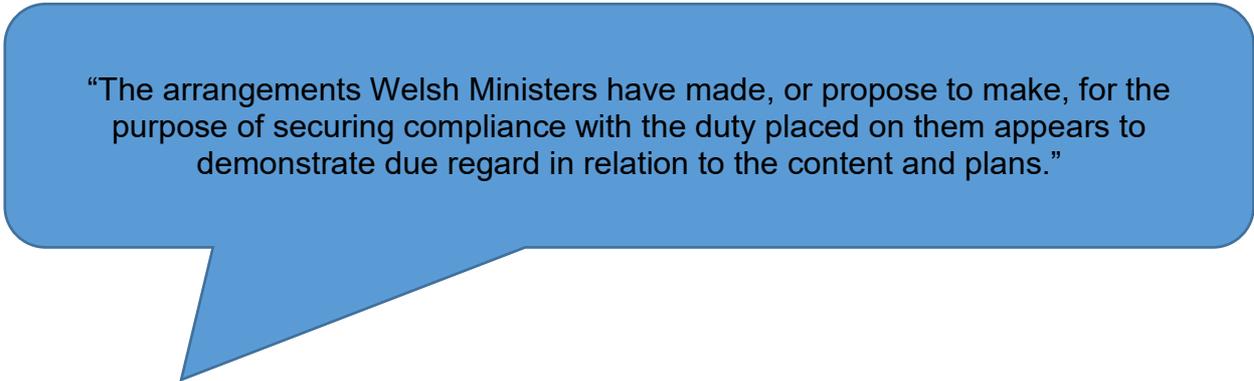
<p>Calls for training on the UNCRC for officials to be mandatory, also to be included as part of the induction process for all new starters, with refresher training provided where there is a change in role</p>
<p>More detail about Ministerial training</p>
<p>Set out clear expectations placed upon all officials to undertake mandatory and recurring training of a meaningful length to enable due regard duties to be discharged</p>
<p>Include a commitment in the final Scheme that training will be articulated in the manual for officials</p>
<p>Calls for separate CRIA training and inclusion of the CRIA training in the final Scheme</p>
<p>Strengthen the narrative in the CRIA section to reinforce the relationship in supporting the due regard duty. The same respondent suggested the section could be further enhanced by affirming that the CRIA process is consistent with the UNCRCs requirements as set out in the General Measures of Implementation (Articles 4, 42 and 44(6))</p>
<p>Role of CRIA</p>
<p>A commitment to completing CRIA on all policy/legislative proposals that directly or indirectly impact on children, and for Welsh Government to introduce legislation to make a CRIA a statutory requirement</p>
<p>Include the commitment to publish CRIAs in the final Scheme</p>
<p>The CRIA section should outline the process that adults should follow in relation to challenging a decision such as to not undertake a CRIA</p>
<p>Compliance</p>
<p>Set out the arrangements for monitoring and reporting compliance</p>
<p>Inclusion of a road map to strengthen and secure compliance with the due regard duty to apply in revising the Scheme</p>
<p>Using evidence/data</p>
<p>Strengthen data collection mechanisms specifically to address the lack of Wales specific and disaggregated data</p>
<p>Make it clear whether the evidence strategy will be used to ensure a better understanding of potential discrimination issues as well as to enable Welsh Government officials to take action to address these issues</p>
<p>Awareness raising/communication</p>
<p>Provide clarity in respect of the role of the awareness raising stakeholder group</p>

A commitment to routinely promote the Welsh Government website through information and communication channels, including social media to highlight CRIAs
Due regard duty to Article 12 and 13 could have stronger consideration for children with communication difficulties. Recommends that speech, language and communication needs be considered as a key element within the Scheme
UN Concluding Observations report
Take account of the UK Children’s Commissioners’ joint report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child from December 2020
Include state wide strategies and action plans to respond to the 2016 Concluding Observations, including how the Concluding Observations responses will be captured in the manual for officials, awareness raising strategy, the evidence strategy and the participation strategy
Take account of ‘List of Issues prior to reporting’ from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child from February 2021 as a means to articulate how the list of issues will be embodied
Recommendations such as those made in the 2016 Concluding Observations, should be factored in to the decision-making process
Welsh Government budget
More detail on the allocation and tracking of resources, and transparent and participatory budget processes
Include the need for transparency in the budget process
Other suggestions to strengthen the Scheme
Explicitly state the unique linguistic landscape of Wales and the need to ensure that children can use the Welsh language including reference to the Measure and the Standards and how they relate to children’s rights in Welsh e.g. correspondence, education etc
Suggests that a clear commitment is made to how the needs of children and young people with health conditions will be understood by the Welsh Government and how this context impacts on their rights
Include reforms to laws and policies that support implementation of the UNCRC
Include a process for engagement with the Children’s Rights Advisory Group (CRAG) about whether a proposal significantly impacts children and young people.
General
Consistently refer to children and young people to prevent older young people from feeling excluded The ‘Background’ section of the final Scheme should be clearer about how Welsh Ministers must consider any other reports, suggestions, general recommendations or other documents published by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, including the last set of concluding observations

Inclusion of a clearer articulation of how a publically stated commitment to children's rights is translated into policy and decision making and how the final Scheme describes these commitments in all of their work and publications

A CRIA of the Scheme approved by the Senedd

Excerpts from responses



“The arrangements Welsh Ministers have made, or propose to make, for the purpose of securing compliance with the duty placed on them appears to demonstrate due regard in relation to the content and plans.”

Welsh Government response

We are carefully considering these comments as we develop the arrangements listed in the draft scheme.

Question 2: Do you think structuring the Children’s Rights Scheme, following the Right Way approach, supports Welsh Ministers to have due regard to children’s rights according to the UNCRC, when exercising any of their functions?

The majority of the respondents 19 (79%) agreed that structuring the draft Scheme following the Right Way approach supported Welsh Ministers to have due regard to the UNCRC. One respondent (4%) did not support the use of the Right Way approach. Four respondents (17%) did not respond to this question.

Key comments in support of its use included:

- Structuring the Scheme around the five principles of the Right Way approach provides a strategic framework to integrate children’s rights into decision-making, policy and practice;
- It will establish an effective route from principle to practice, and will mean there is co-ordination and consistency amongst relevant bodies/agencies
- Seeing the Welsh Government adopt the Right Way formally provides real leadership and paves the way for many more to adopt a similar approach and thinking processes to their work; and
- Takes into account participation, provision and protection which are integral to a children’s rights approach.

Some respondents asked the Welsh Government to consider broader operational application of the Right Way principles. Some views given were:

- It is important that the principles drive the way of working rather than trying to fit existing work around the principles;
- Suggest that there is scope to strengthen the arrangements in the draft Scheme to support application of the principles by Ministers;
- It is important to consider how this is implemented at an operational level, particularly the fifth principle of accountability as children’s rights give rise to obligations which demand accountability; and
- It is stated that children’s rights are at the core of Welsh Government policy making. It is not sufficient to make blanket statements such as this without demonstrating or evidencing how this is the case. The Scheme should be part of embedding rights across the work of Government, but it would help to set out what having rights at the core of policy making actually means or looks like in practice.

Excerpts from Responses

“Mae’r egwyddorion a’r camau a amlinellir yn sownd. Rhaid sicrhau bod y rhain yn cael eu gwireddu mewn gwirionedd, gan sicrhau – er enghraifft – bod Gweinidogion yn cael cyfle i glywed lleisiau plant a phobl ifanc ac yn eu cymryd o ddifrif – hefyd yn edrych ar dystiolaeth yn ddiragfarn.”

Question 3: Do you agree with the outcomes outlined in the document under each of the sections?

Yes Please tell us why

No How do you think these outcomes could be strengthened?

15 of the respondents (63%) agreed with the outcomes in the draft Scheme, eight respondents (33%) did not agree with the outcomes and one respondent (4%) did not respond to this question.

Respondents gave the following suggestions to strengthen the Scheme's outcomes:

Outcome 3 (Embedding Children's Rights)

- Resources advising children and young people on the responsibilities that ministers, Welsh Government officials and deputy directors have towards them will be published on the Welsh Government website at the same time as the manual for officials.
- Seeking a clearer explanation/specification within the Scheme on what the manual will consist of and the critical messages for staff.
- The Scheme should list the key procedural elements of CRIA and include a template and flowcharts.
- The Scheme could be strengthened if it gave more detail about what is meant by a "multi-layered training approach".
- The updated awareness strategy should contain strong links to the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) framework.
- Involvement of specialist nurses and training.

Outcome 4 (Equality and Non-Discrimination)

- Clear evidence (Children's Rights Strategy Impact Assessment) should be a requirement for all outcomes, not just outcome 4 and reflection of suitability, effectiveness and achievements.
- Address funding levels across Wales to support inclusion and accessibility
- Ensure that professionals are trauma-informed when asking children and young people to recount their experiences, as revisiting past traumas can be difficult.
- The Scheme should specify how CRIA might be used to focus on equality and non-discrimination. The Scheme should include intended actions to promote better understanding of and attention to equality and non-discrimination.
- Consider how different cohorts of children experience different types and levels of discrimination.

Outcome 5 (Empowering Children)

- Clearly define the age at which children learn about their rights.
- Involve children and young people in the raising awareness strategy and include them in a stakeholder group and ensure Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are represented as stakeholders.

- Suggests actions that could be included under empowerment to strengthen the draft Scheme.
- Welcome the use of the curriculum in the awareness raising strategy, suggesting the Welsh Government consider active stakeholder groups, opportunities to embed rights-based education across the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE) and education in formal and non-formal settings in development of the strategy.

Outcome 6 (Participation)

- How the development of a participation strategy, and the establishment of a stakeholder group will contribute to the discharge of the due regard duty, not clear in the draft Scheme.
- Include a mechanism that explains to children and young people why a policy isn't changed.
- Welcomes the ability for children and young people to participate in the policy process.
- Outline the role of the Youth Parliament.
- For the participation strategy children and young people are suitably trained to have the understanding, skills and confidence to participate in the policy making process and how children and young people can be active in raising concerns about their rights and in relation to specific policy proposals.
- Consideration of pupil voice and rights-based approaches currently in existence.
- An equal focus on non-school related learning (EHE) and youth provision to ensure opportunities are available for those outside of formal education.
- Suggest facilitated engagement rather than consultation.
- Suggests the participation strategy be embedded in the Education Directorate as a pilot before wider roll out across the Government to develop a widespread awareness and understanding among officials of how it links to their own work.
- The participation strategy will need to be supported and underpinned by training encompassing the different participation models which enable participation at different levels and in different ways in the process - informing, consulting, co-producing, strategic engagement, research, accountability and also in the initiation of policy.

Outcome 7 (Accountability)

- Information needed on how the complaints process will work and how children will be kept informed.
- Commented on the reference to the Children's Commissioner for Wales' role to hold Ministers to account, and the Senedd's role to scrutinise the Scheme, and how neither of these are arrangements made by Ministers to ensure compliance with the due regard duty, and should instead be suggested as mechanisms for accountability introduced by Ministers.
- The inclusion of a timescale for delivery and identification of resources to support this work.

- The Scheme should include information on how the outcome from CRIA's might be challenged.
- The draft Scheme should set out how the outcome statements will be monitored and measured as part of the Accountability section.

Excerpts from Responses

“Children are the central focus point. They start with a top down approach from ensuring the Welsh Government are trained appropriately and strategies are in place to ensure equality and non-discrimination. They then allow children to have a voice and include them in the participation and accountability. The effectiveness of these outcomes therefore can continue to be monitored by a feedback process making sure children are actually aware of their rights.”

Question 4: We would like to know your views on the effects that these proposals would have on the Welsh language.

11 of the respondents (46%) believe the proposals in the draft Scheme would support the Welsh language, one respondent (4%) believed the proposals do not support the Welsh language sufficiently and 12 respondents (50%) did not respond to this question.

The majority felt the draft Scheme would have a positive effect on the Welsh language provided all the arrangements put in place by the Scheme were offered bilingually, as the Welsh Government would be required to do under our Welsh Language Standards. Some respondents thought that there should be a more explicit reference to the Welsh language in the final Scheme that outlines how the Welsh language has been considered. Another respondent argued that the status of the language needs to be made clear in the final Scheme

One respondent thought that the final Scheme should restate the commitment to produce child-friendly versions of documents in child-friendly Welsh that will support greater accessibility in Welsh and the opportunity for children and young people to be communicated with in their language of choice.

Excerpts from Responses

“If implemented as intended, we would envisage that the proposals will have a positive impact of delivering improved outcomes for children and young people who use, and access information through the Welsh language.”

Question 5: If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to tell us about them.

Of the 24 respondents, 11(46%) offered related issues for consideration. 13 respondents (54%) did not respond to this question.

Many of the respondents provided valuable insight into ideas for a participation strategy and an awareness raising strategy.

There was support for a child-friendly complaints, compliments and feedback process especially if children and young people are involved in its development. This will provide useful practice that could be emulated elsewhere by public services in Wales. The following comments were made:

- Would welcome resources such as a website hub with rights information, contact details and information leaflets that could be used in health settings, to help children, young people and families improve their knowledge of children's rights, the Bill, and how to access support if challenge is needed;
- Greater clarity needed on how complaints will be received and actioned, and how children and young people can access the complaints process;
- Is there is a process where children and young people can have access to individual support if they feel their rights have not been met?
- It is important that it (the complaints process) looks at wider accountability not just complaints; how can children and young people ask for more information, become involved in the work of the Government and provide their feedback? This will need to link to the participation and awareness raising strategies as well as the CRIA process. The role of advocacy to support children to have their voices heard should also feature clearly in a revised process. The revised process will need to be developed with and tested by children and young people to measure how effective and useful it is;
- Suggest widening the scope of this process beyond complaints made about the application of the duty by Ministers and the CRIA to all complaints about other issues that are unrelated to their rights under the Measure. This is missing an opportunity to provide a comprehensive complaints service that is fully accessible for children and young people.

A number of respondents articulated the importance of children and young people having access to information and support regarding their rights, particularly if they feel their rights have not been met. The following comments were made:

- More information to be made available for adults and professionals concerning how Meic operates as a resource;
- The Children's Rights Scheme must include information on pathways of support to specialist services and ensure that specialist support is available where and when a child needs it. This will require adequate and sustainable funding of specialist support services.

Two respondents identified a lack of recognition in the draft Scheme of the input required from parents/guardians, and the crucial role they have in empowering children and young people.

One comment noted that the Scheme by its nature is particularly compliance driven with outcomes that describe process changes that demonstrate accordance with the Convention. However, the strategic and systemic context is missing. It is not clear how the Scheme will contribute to the Welsh Government's strategic agenda for children and young people in terms of child poverty, child protection and childcare and thus result in improved services and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people. The final Scheme would have greater impact if connections with these wider outcomes that affect children's lives were made explicit.

A number of respondent's made reference to calls for further incorporation of the UNCRC into Welsh Law. There were a number of comments for the wider public sector:

- Training should be made available and delivered at all levels to ensure that children and young people are empowered and have the confidence and skills to express their views and that adults are trained to be skilled facilitators;
- How will children's rights in health will be delivered in terms of the proposed Scheme?
- A Children's Rights approach must also be trauma informed and needs led; and
- Each outcome must be interrogated for validity, transparency and inclusivity. Measuring the outcomes must include data that looks at the responses to ensure that children and young people are able to live life free from abuse and are provided with protection and support when necessary.

Excerpts from Responses



"I welcome the inclusion of a children and young people's version of this consultation."

5. Summary of consultation responses: children and young people version

Overall there were 10 responses to the consultation. One wished to remain anonymous. All responses are quoted in their original language.

Question 1: The Children's Rights Scheme outlines the plans of Welsh Ministers to support children's rights. Do you have any views on the Scheme?

All 10 respondents (100%) gave additional views on the draft Scheme.

Eight respondents (80%) were supportive of the Children's Rights Scheme. Four respondents (40%) felt that Children's Rights and the Scheme should be better publicised with two suggestions (20%) for more information on UNCRC to be delivered in schools. Two respondents (20%) indicated training for ministers is required, so decisions can be made with children and young people in mind.

Respondents made the following suggestions to strengthen the Scheme:

- Produce Child-Friendly documents.
- Easier routes to complain/compliment Welsh Government.
- Methods to promote the UNCRC with children and young people could be more engaging and relevant.

Excerpts from Responses

"It shows how Welsh Government will take children's human rights and views in to consideration"

Question 2: What else should go into the Scheme?

Nine respondents (90%) suggested additional areas to be covered by the draft Scheme. One respondent (10%) did not reply to this question.

One respondent suggested the final Scheme should be more widely promoted across Wales.

A respondent challenged the use of the word best in the sentence 'Children's rights underpin our ambition for each and every child to have the best start in life and to fulfil their potential.' The respondent found it patronising.

One respondent suggested the Scheme could include a greater emphasis on training for teachers, as well as information for schools on rights.

One respondent suggested that the Welsh Government reported on compliance with the due regard duty every two years instead of every two and a half years.

One respondent suggested that the Welsh Government produces a Child-Friendly version of the compliance report.

A number of specific suggestions for improving the final Scheme were put forward, these are listed below with an indication on whether the Welsh Government will consider these suggestions in drafting the final Scheme:

Suggestion
Outlining how the Welsh Government requires or supports other organisations to promote children's rights
Strengthening the equality and non-discrimination section by outlining what the Welsh Government does to tackle discrimination, racism and gender equality and tackling discrimination in education
Make the final Scheme more concise and use less ambiguous language
Clarifying that Welsh Ministers listen to children and young people and also act on what they say
More effectively outline what rights children and young people have
Make section four less passive
Strengthen section five to make it clear how children and young people get access to the Welsh Government to hold us to account

Excerpts from Responses

"There is not enough focus given at the moment in the scheme to prevent discrimination amongst young people and more should be done about this."

Question 3: How can you be more involved in influencing the decisions of Welsh Government?

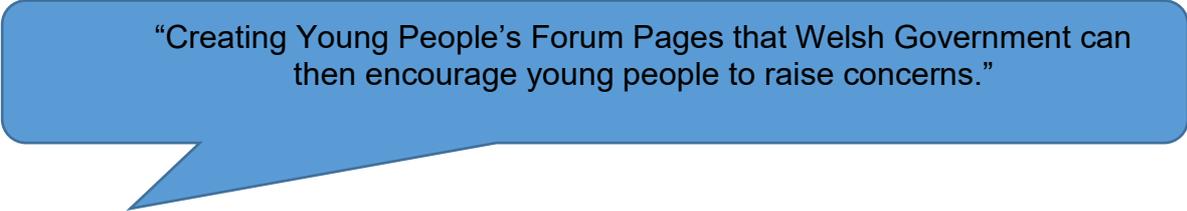
All 10 respondents (100%) gave suggestions for how children and young people could be more involved in influencing Welsh Government decisions.

The majority of responses to this question asked for increased opportunities for engagement with children and young people through different channels, such as social media, via consultations, and by speaking directly to Ministers. It is also clear from the responses that children and young people wish to be involved as early as possible in the decision making process before it is too late for their feedback to be acted upon. Many respondents gave suggestions for effective methods of participation.

Other suggestions about how children and young people can be involved in decision making included:

- Using the complaints process;
- Create a Young People's Forum page for children and young people to raise concerns; and
- Promotion of the 'Make your Mark' campaign.

Excerpts from Responses



“Creating Young People’s Forum Pages that Welsh Government can then encourage young people to raise concerns.”

Question 4: How can Welsh Ministers make sure everyone knows about and supports children's rights?

All 10 respondents (100%) gave suggestions for how Welsh Ministers can make sure everyone knows about and supports children's rights.

Seven respondents (70%) suggested raising awareness of Children's Rights through a communication campaign (social media, TV, Posters, Videos,)

Eight respondents (80%) suggested Children's Rights should be made compulsory in schools and delivered through the Curriculum and posters put up in schools.

These suggestions included:

- Introduce more initiatives and opportunities where children's rights are spoken about, and ensure children and young people are being taught about children's rights;
- Welsh Government should provide tangible evidence that children and young people's voices are making a difference to all policy areas that affect children and young people's lives;
- Make information easily accessible;
- Be clearer how the UNCRC informs Welsh Government decisions; and
- Ministers to work in partnership with other bodies to help raise awareness of rights.

Excerpts from Responses

"Via Social Media Pages – they currently lack any presence on Social Media platforms aimed at young people, more could be done to raise awareness of rights this way."

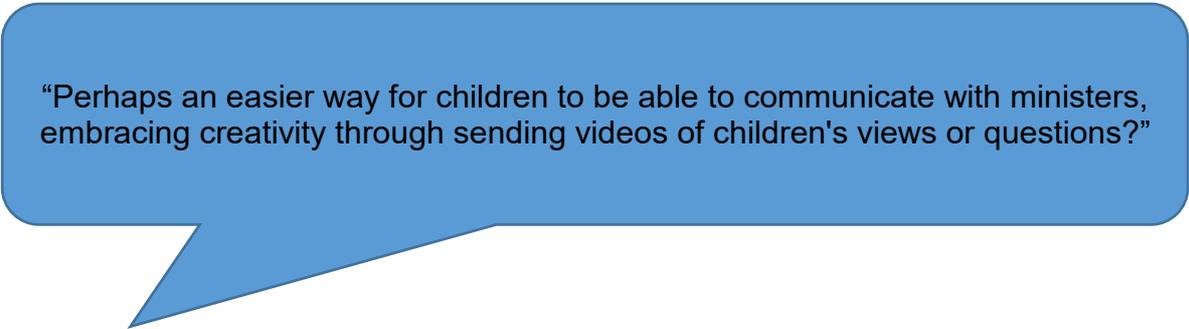
Question 5: How would you like to provide feedback to Welsh Government?

The majority of the respondents, nine (90%) gave the Welsh Government suggestions for how they would like to respond. One respondent (10%) did not answer the question.

Children and young people were supportive of finding a suitable route to provide feedback to the Welsh Government suggesting digital options (e.g sending videos, online surveys and polls through social media preferred by young people and through a specifically created email through Hwb.)

One respondent suggested that the Welsh Government should ask teachers, write to children and young people directly or produce a survey for children and young people to give their views to the government.

Excerpts from Responses



“Perhaps an easier way for children to be able to communicate with ministers, embracing creativity through sending videos of children's views or questions?”

Question 6: How can we make sure that the Welsh and English languages are treated equally?

Six of the respondents (60%) gave suggestions for how to treat the Welsh and English languages equally, one respondent (10%) did not give any suggestions and three respondents (30%) did not answer the question.

One respondent stated that documents should be published in user friendly formats in both English and Welsh.

“Young People felt that Welsh Government are currently doing this as a matter of good practice – but Welsh Government need to understand the wider needs of the community too - making sure the good work continues no matter what government is in office.

6. Summary of consultation responses – children and young people workshops

Overall feedback on the draft Scheme as provided by Re:Cognition included:

- The five sections of the scheme were generally well understood with many participants being able to see how they linked together to form a whole.
- Participants expressed concern regarding what they perceived as the weakness of children and young people's voices within the scheme.
- Many thought that the scheme was too general, not enough detail about how it would work in practice, leading them to voice the term tokenism, however, this did not develop into a major theme.
- Many participants felt that the scheme needed to be more directive, more challenging of practice in areas such as education, health and other services that have an impact on children and their rights. They wanted the scheme to set out in bold terms - identifying what needed to change and how that change could take pace. This widening of the scope was seen as key by some participants, as they saw that all services around children and young people can either facilitate rights, or be a barrier to them.
- In previous consultation events the concept of "Due Regard" was seen as a problem as participants perceived it as giving the Government "wriggle room", to avoid doing the difficult and expensive things. This cynicism was not voiced in these events.

A copy of the full report can be found here:

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2021-06/consultation-with-children-and-young-people.pdf>. Responses given by children and young people at the workshops are included in Annex B

7. Welsh Government Response

The Welsh Government is extremely grateful for all responses on the draft Scheme. We are also grateful for detailed thoughts on the arrangements listed in the scheme including:

- The proposed manual for staff;
- The proposed training programme;
- The proposed awareness raising strategy;
- The proposed evidence strategy;
- The proposed participation model;
- Complaints process for children;

The Welsh Government has sought to focus this summary response on matters relating to the draft Scheme, however we recognise that much of the intelligence received to this consultation will be invaluable in helping the Welsh Government to draft these future pieces of work.

Suggestions specific to strengthening the Scheme have been included in sections 4, 5 and 6 above.

Overall there was support for the Scheme, but with an acknowledgement that more detail was required. Some of the responses also demonstrated a lack of clarity about the role of the Scheme.

We are carefully considering these comments as we develop the arrangements listed in the draft scheme. Our 5-stage approach to updating the Scheme and its arrangements is set out below:

- publish the consultation response document in June;
- develop the arrangements listed in the Scheme;
- publish the raising awareness strategy;
- publish the manual (following the development of all arrangements); and
- publish the final Scheme

During the consultation period, the Welsh Government received the initial list of issues from the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. We are also considering these issues in developing the revised scheme and the arrangements.

8. Annex A

Responses were received from the following individuals or organisations:

1. Blaenau Gwent CBC Youth Forum
2. Bryn Bach Primary School
3. Carmarthenshire Youth Council
4. Children in Wales
5. Children in Wales, Young Wales
6. Children's Commissioner for Wales
7. Clybiau Plant Cymru
8. Cymdeithas y Cymod, ForcesWatch, Peace Pledge Union (joint response)
9. Early Years Wales
10. Equality and Human Rights Commission
11. Llantwit Youth Council Members
12. Mudiad Meithrin
13. Natural Resources Wales
14. NSPCC
15. NYAS Cymru
16. PACEY Cymru
17. Pembrokeshire County Council
18. Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
19. Pupils 2 Parliament
20. Raymond Greenwood
21. Respondent wished to remain anonymous
22. Respondent wished to remain anonymous
23. Respondent wished to remain anonymous
24. Rhieni Dros Addysg Gymraeg
25. Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health
26. Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists
27. The Catholic Education Service
28. The Observatory on Human Rights of Children, Swansea University
29. UNCRC Monitoring Group
30. Vale Rights Ambassadors (11-17)
31. Vale Youth Council – Vale Youth Service
32. Wales Humanists
33. Welsh Centre for International Affairs
34. Welsh Women's Aid

9. Annex B

As these workshops represented the views of a number of children and young people their feedback to the consultation questions is given verbatim as provided by Re:Cognition. **All responses included in this annex are quoted in their original language.**

Question 1: The Children's Rights Scheme outlines the plans of Welsh Ministers to support children's rights. Do you have any views on the Scheme?

It needs to be more descriptive:

- 'It needs to say how they will get into classrooms, get more involved, because I know our schools talks about getting us involved and stuff, but don't actually do anything.'
- 'It does not go far enough.'
- 'Nothing in here to directly helps us get our voice heard.'
- 'Ministers know nothing about our opinions.'
- 'Say someone's writing a script. Either they give it to the people who have to, they give it to the actors, because they want to get the actors opinion on it that script already been written, and if something is in their eyes, terrible. There's very little, they can do to change it. Because if you're not there in the beginning, learning what people need and want, then asking them later after you've done it means you'll be missing out on excellent opportunities for children to give input and possibly make stuff like this better now.'

Young disabled women's group

- A young disabled women's group said they liked the scheme and understood their rights. They were able to recognise their rights to a good education, a healthy life and to be kept safe. They explained they would feel confident, to seek support, if their rights were not being listened to (which supported the scheme's 5 sections: helping children to be the best they can be and to use their rights). They said they were not aware of this scheme before the presentation but would like to find out more information that could support their views on young females with learning needs. They would like to see more specific information on how the scheme supports children and young people with disabilities and learning needs in Wales. The girls could also recognise that children and young people in Wales could be seen as more fortunate compared to other children and young people, in third world countries that don't always have the same rights.

When considering the scheme

- 'I feel like sometimes in the past organisations have done children's rights as tokenism. Yeah, sometime people talk to us, but we haven't really done anything meaningful in consultation with young people or children. Not sure this will make a difference as I can see nothing to say how they will be involving us. Maybe just more tokenism'

Speaking in support of Welsh Governments compliance to Article 12:

- ‘I was a member of the youth Parliament and I had really good meetings during the pandemic with the First Minister and other ministers, and I think it's good that the government has an open dialogue with young people.’

Roll out across the world:

- ‘I was thinking of, like, putting this type of scheme across the world, because other countries may not have this type of scheme, and they might have a bigger population than our country and more people who are at risk. So, I think we need to make everybody as a world to back this scheme.’

When considering the Scheme

- ‘I think for the core of this children’s rights scheme is the right framework. But having rights does not mean you have equal opportunity. There are barriers that need to change and this scheme does not show you how to do this.’

Question 2: What else should go into the Scheme?

Time line

- 'It needs a clear timeline so we can know when to expect change. Knowing when it's coming, what difference is it going to make and when's it going to happen'

Widening the schemes scope

- 'Yeah, I think really there should be an emphasis on smaller organisations following children's rights properly. Because you know it's all good that ministers have to do it, but when it comes to the actual services who work directly with young people, well it's not ministers is it. All organisations who support young people should be made to do it properly.'

Embedding diversity into engagement:

- 'They should have to listen to children like us who have disabilities, Yes, and people who have different background and the scheme should say that.'
- 'I 100% agree, if you don't talk to people from more niche of parts of societies and only look at one specific part of young people, then you're only gonna get one specific views of the few yeah. They must include wide variety of people.'

Knowledge of Children's rights for those most in need:

- 'Until today, I did not know anything about children's rights, I did not know it was a thing and it seems like it's a whole movement. How we can find out should be in the scheme.'
- 'Young people living in difficult circumstances have the least rights. All those articles we looked at, loads of kids are not provided with what they should be, their rights are broken. And these kids may not know anything about their rights.'

Schools need to be obliged to teach children's rights:

- 'We can't comment if we know little about our rights. It should be embedded in the curriculum from day one in school. Schools need to be told to do it.'

Engagement mechanisms

- 'The scheme should state how they will engage with young people in detail. There are lots of already formalised networks, why not use them and say how.'
- 'It's good to have this really nice plan. But if young people don't know about it, it's kind of a bit pointless really.'

Schools and health services must enable children's rights.

- 'Schools don't help people enough with their rights, you have a right not to be bullied but schools do nothing about it.'

- ‘Having a right to healthcare also means nothing if you can’t get it, like mental health, not much support, or support for people with learning needs.’
- ‘Schools should be made to have a children’s rights charter where they have to prove the work they are doing in school to get fully behind children’s rights by actual supporting people.’
- ‘Doctor don’t take teenagers seriously and don’t tend to stick to children’s rights, so maybe more education for health professionals but certainly doctors.’

Young disabled women’s group

- Similar to other groups, they would like to see more specific information on how the scheme supports children and young people with disabilities and learning needs in Wales. The girls would like to know more about how their rights may change as they transition into adulthood with learning needs.

Voting support

- In several groups’ participants expressed a wish for politics lessons sighting the need to vote in an informed way.
- ‘People are unaware of what they are voting for.’
- ‘Political education should be mandatory in schools. This should be a right – its needed.’
- ‘I think there should be more awareness about these things. I know about voting in elections and things like that, because I’m very involved in politics, but I knew a lot of other people, my friends, they don’t understand, they have no idea who how to get involved and what information is available to them, and how it can affect them directly as a child.’

Being clear about age:

- ‘The scheme should be clearer about the ages it supports. Young people are supported in Wales up to the age of 24.’

Not enough detail:

- ‘I would say there needs to be more detail, I know training would give more detail, but I would personally prefer more detail in this scheme, because often, especially if you’re a young carer, you see the words they know the words, they understand the words but they can just nod along agree - and then it becomes a tick box. But if there’s more detail and strict criteria for each point its harder to sit there nodding

Co-production is not mentioned

- ‘Does Welsh Government understand co-production? If they do, they should use it with young people.’

Information about the Youth Parliament

- ‘I did not know about the Youth Parliament until today.’

Question 3: How can you be more involved in influencing the decisions of Welsh Government?

Key message:

- ‘Government should talk to us like you're their friend rather than being an adult that has power over us, talk to us like you're there to actually listen, not like you're there to just collect data, because I think people are going to be a lot more honest if they think you actually want to listen and you actually care about their opinions.’
- ‘I think we could be more involved if we had more knowledge about what's going on.’
- ‘Voices need to be heard and they need to have a way to know that how they're contributing is making the difference.’
- ‘When we get involved with say a consultation, what happened with it does not come back to us to say what decisions were made. It makes you think why bother.’

Meeting politicians directly

- ‘We had a good meeting with Eluned Morgan where she asked us what we thought of how they've dealt with mental health problems. We felt listened to. This was much better than a survey, you can get a conversation’
- ‘People are more affected when they hear it directly from young people rather than statistics.’
- ‘I think it made a difference hearing it from actual kids from that experience rather than just hearing it from someone who works with her.’
- ‘Maybe video conferencing with ministers in schools if that would work. Yeah, they could do say 15 or 20 minutes per school and get round a few. That would be a lot of schools in a month.’
- ‘Zoom, yeah, it offers ways forward because I think it's easier for people across Wales to contribute to these discussions online, because people live in different areas, rural areas and getting to meetings can be hard.,
- ‘The most important thing is face to face time, in real life or on video conference.’
- ‘Politicians and government workers should reach out to young people and small groups, it's up to them as they have the power.’
- ‘Meeting ministers needs to be made more accessible. Right now, it's all about knowing the right people at the right time in the right place and that's how you meet with ministers. It's important to emphasise that accessibility to minister should not be just for the same types of people who are already in organisations that get these opportunities.’

Diversity - when considering representation of those involved:

- ‘Through networks we can find talented young people. I'm not saying that the representatives need to be members of the group because we know quite often the best engaged are the white middle class. Unfortunately, it's just a fact. Peer to peer communication that engages with wider young people is needed or only the middle class will be involved’

- ‘We must make sure that young people who engage with Ministers are not just the middle-class academic kids. They must include economically disadvantaged young people.’

When considering engagement through schools:

- ‘Directly through schools is the best way forward.’
- ‘Contact should be organised by the school that way everyone's gonna hear about it.’
- ‘Welsh Government should come to the school and talk to us.’
- ‘I think people who know about right should come into schools and like talk to their classes about it, yeah, people like you.’
- ‘We could rely less on technology and more on like our teachers, and people that we communicate with daily, instead of just petitions.’

When considering the role of school councils:

- ‘If a school counsellor to be used fully they really need an overhaul. In high schools they are tokenistic. They are they're to say that the school has taken input from young people rather than to actually take on board what we're saying.’
- ‘What happens in in a school council tends to stay within a school council.’
- ‘We have a meeting about once a month, which isn't much.’
- ‘They could useful as long as like the children who were in the school council are willing to actually work. I'm in a school counsellor at my school and I knew there were quite a few people, just aren't really bothered about getting involved. They can be part of the solution, but they are also part of the problem.’
- ‘To get school councils to be more than a useless popularity contest, they need to be open so that anybody who wishes to attend can attend. Just having representatives is too narrow and when I was on the School Council, only four of us would attend. Because it's a popularity contest, it largely includes people who really don't care that much.’
- ‘If it was an open thing, people could go and have their say. Having it open to people means anyone can enter and sit in on these meetings and give their opinions, that would remove the popularity contest and instead have people who are highly engaged and interested, be able to speak in important terms like children's rights.’
- ‘I think every school should have some kind of children's rights group attached to it, this could be through the school council, yeah that makes sense.’
- ‘We should have a children's rights group within the school council’.
- ‘Youth councils should have a direct line to Government.’
- ‘Think the most effective way to get communication going would probably be through schools, like a day or something, like we did for the new curriculum, we all got sent a survey that I completed so I think that would be a really effective way.’
- ‘Representatives is mainly those students who are highly engaged very smart quite academic and are usually going places. This excludes the people who need changes the most.’

- ‘School counsellors, largely a popularity contest.’

When considering Welsh Government’s consultations and engagement:

- ‘I think any consultations the Welsh Government brings out needs to be in an accessible format for young people, because these consultations are usually like massive and detailed and young people don't have the time to fill out these consultations.’
- ‘Documents from government need more creative designs for young people. I mean your layout could be a bit different so you know like you have mind maps, or blue boxes something like that because just like bullet point after bullet point, there's no way you can remember all that way, but if it was categories and mind mapped, it would be better.’
- ‘I know where we live, we've got some rights ambassadors and then there's also student ambassadors in schools. That's not a thing everywhere in Wales, trying to get more people to join up maybe making that more of like an across Wales thing to provide more of a link for the government to be able to talk to young people who are designated within their school to represent people's views.’

When considering getting involved through youth councils.

- All groups which included some form of youth council thought engagement with government could and should take place through these forums.

Creating youth forums for young people who are learning disabled.

- One group of young people felt that for their needs to be properly and not tokenistic address, there was a need for a ‘forum’ style group for young people with learning needs. This could help raise more awareness in government for issues that young disabled people face.

Learning from engagement methods used in different sectors:

- ‘National Institute of Health and Care Excellence send out an application form to young people, exactly the same way they do for adults.’
- ‘If we use forms, despite how much pressure is on the government to listen, there isn't going to be the voices of the minorities because, I know among people with similar issues to me, writing and spelling issues, the moment a form comes in we lose all interest. There has to be a less intrusive, less formal way of doing it that's still professional.’

Create training sessions to assist young people to advocate for themselves and others:

- ‘We need peer to peer engagement sessions to help show young people how to engage with Government and NGOs.’
- ‘I think it would be a case of learning how to ask the right question.’

Question 4: How can Welsh Ministers make sure everyone knows about and supports children's rights?

Key messages:

- 'Whatever is done, it must be kept up and not just dropped.'
- 'Ministers don't know what they are doing, they are the ones who need to be taught about children's rights.'
- 'We have not done a thing at school about children's rights. We need to know this'

When considering Educating young people to know their rights:

- 'It's, well and good, integrating rights into other subjects. It needs to be its own thing, there needs to be a subject that is taught, that is just children's rights. Integrating it into other stuff like English wouldn't get the point across in the same way.'
- 'At key stages 3 and 4, in English we have to write essays and things like that, I suppose, they could ask people to write essays on politics and research the UNCHC on that rather than Treasure Planet.'
- 'Have school books that are based on children's rights.'
- 'When we were in primary school, we did a lot on children's rights, we had a few weeks and we learned about children's rights. I'm not sure if the other primary school did. We should encourage the younger level to ease children in to learning about children's rights.'
- 'Rights should not be taught in Primary schools as they are too young. Maybe in years five and six.'
- 'Young people should perhaps have more education in schools in a secondary school environment, discuss politics and how it affects us.'
- 'A year ago, I had no idea about children's rights and the right to have your say, so how could I have rights if I did not know about them? We need really strong advertising saying you have these rights, maybe use posters, social media and adverts. Going back to the tick box thing, schools can show you a video or PowerPoint and think yeah, we've done it – tick boxing. It only works if it is done frequently and helps achieve real things.'
- 'I think there should be more workshops for young people, maybe in like schools or maybe like, like in forum type sessions. There should be like, workshops, just to explain it, what we need to know.'
- 'We could have something like a YouTube news channel for young people. There needs to be news targeted to different ages, teenagers need different stuff to young kids.'
- 'When children grow up and don't actually know about children's rights or human rights in general, it can be a problem. They need to know beforehand and when they younger.'
- 'We need to have easily accessible information for people to use you know. I don't know how you do it, but just make sure that people think of it the same time as they're thinking about all the other things that are important.'
- 'Rights should be in the Welsh curriculum.'
- 'School should not just teach rights once - it needs to be drilled in.'

- ‘In a kind of viral way, use young people to inform young people.’

Educate young people in registration:

- ‘In registration in the morning, we have 10 minutes where we could be taught children’s rights.’
- ‘I think it’ll be good because you can also talk though it with your classmates.’

Educating parents regarding children’s rights:

- ‘What to start with... because even though like it’s important to teach young people their rights, those people who help put rights in place are our parents and caregivers.’
- ‘Working with us, there could be an information pack made to help educate adults. This could be updated every year.’
- ‘Because children don’t always pass on stuff from schools to their parents, they need to be contacted directly with rights information.’
- ‘We could have like press conferences for parents where they could ask ministers about children’s rights and what they are doing about it.’

Educating teachers

- ‘I think children's rights needs to be educated to teachers, they could be involved in like, teacher training days, insets days, and things like that that.’

Educate the Criminal Justice Services

- ‘What about Criminal Justice Services? They really need to know about rights.’

Educate through Social media:

- There were discussions on Social Media in all of the workshops with all understanding its value as a means to help all people to get information and to learn about children’s rights. They recognised that Facebook would be a good way to engage with parents, but it’s not the best for children and young people who are increasingly abandoning the platform in favour on Instagram, TikTok, Twitter and Snapchat.
- One young person summed it up when talking about Facebook:
- ‘who wants to be on social media with you mum, nobody wants that!’
- ‘You could advertise on TikTok and Instagram by making images and short videos.’
- ‘Tik-Tok could work well, but it must not feel like they are learning something because nobody goes on TikTok to learn stuff, make it fun first with learning in the background.’
- ‘The government could set up TikTok and Instagram account just about children’s right where they could tell us about the ideas and find out what we think. The good thing with social media is that every single platform has an option to direct message someone so it's not like you have to

complain in front of many people you can literally just send a message directly to them.'

Educate through advertising:

- Welsh Government already uses this approach in a number of policy areas. When considering how to get knowledge of Children's Rights to all relevant people and organisations and not just schools:
- 'Advertising would work. There are loads of adds on at the moment like registering to vote so why not about children's rights?'
- 'I was thinking about, social media and technology, maybe, things like Spotify SoundCloud, Apple Music anything really, YouTube as well. Yeah, if there could be adverts because normally when watching a video or listen to music, such as Spotify, add come up on about different things, there could be a 30 second audio on Spotify or video on YouTube that just talks about, human rights and children's rights, everything that is involved with the government, just to educate, and help young people to get involved.'
- 'Advertise using billboards and posters at bus stops.'
- 'They could also advertise in local papers.'
- 'Advertise it properly on the right channels, adjust to the changing generation.'
- 'If you can't rely on the schools to teach us, and if there is funding to do so, could you do information adverts on social media or on TV, because obviously at the moment, everyone's online, so all the kids are available.'
- 'Online adverts that teach would help young people all over Wales because as I said before, we can't rely on schools.'
- 'Advertising people's children's rights, I think it should just be plastered everywhere, all over social media to a lot of people using Instagram, TikTok, and if things are showing up from there. If we can't get this information in schools, then I think advertising it the next best thing.'
- 'Use child friendly posters. Not just where you think children go, but everywhere as we go everywhere.'
- 'Teaching through social media and adverts should become the norm.'

Using sport to educate people about children's rights.

- 'Coaches and clubs could help people understand about children's rights.'

Supporting learners in school:

- 'Schools should have a named person who you can talk to confidentially if you don't understand or think your rights are being broken.'

A rights department in every local authority

- 'Well, we could have in councils an office dedicated to just children's rights or other rights as well, that you can directly go to and knock on the door. They should have walk in appointment, and have a chat in person with somebody, maybe that could be something that could be, I don't now, good?'

Impact of Covid

- 'Because of lockdown, most of us have become more interested in politics.'

Use the third sector:

- 'Utilising those third sector networks, they are pre made and have goals supporting children's rights.'

Question 5: How would you like to provide feedback to Welsh Government?

Individual accessibility is key

- The participants were clear that feedback methods should be in line with individual accessibility issues.

Live streamed direct feedback with Welsh Government:

- 'Maybe having an online zoom session or something as simple as a Facebook Live Stream, where a minister would be on screen, I mean, people could comment, and they would answer in live time and then that could be put onto social media platforms.'
- 'We should have live Q and As with government.'
- 'Ministers could say choose so many schools a month, and like have direct connection with so many young people who could talk directly to them through video conferencing.'
- 'In each form class, we could decide what we want to say to the minister. The form reps could get together and look at all forms together using mind mapping to decide what needs saying. The form reps could then be the confident people speaking in a good 20 minute session with the minister.'
- 'I did a VC q&a with Kirsty Williams and Sally Holland the other day, I think everyone was really keen to talk to people, and to know young opinions are being listened to.'
- 'I don't think surveys will work, we need direct contact with the Government.'
- 'We have over this last year, all seen people like Boris Johnson answering questions using video conferencing. Directly answering questions from other people on VC. This could work... direct connection is best.'

When considering direct feedback through school assemblies:

- 'I know at least in high school, there's one large assembly of the pupils. So maybe in that questions could be asked here.'
- 'I mean with how we're doing video links these days that could work well in assemblies.'
- 'You know every few weeks or something, maybe like half an hour in a morning assembly session, government minister or official could come and explain what they want to do. That could be the start of a communication, but not the end of it.'
- 'That would be an incredible way to move forward, especially with people like me, who spelling and writing is a massive issue Yeah, so if someone was to ask me questions, say they bring up the topic around school holidays and how they should be handled, if I was asked to write an essay on it, I wouldn't. But if I was sat down in a room with a bunch of my peers and people from Welsh Government, I could ask questions and give input, then that would be a superior way of doing it... I agree, yeah I agree.'
- 'I think it's a good thing to have video conferencing with minister and officials through assemblies, with a projector, on a big screen, everybody facing the screen, listening, and that way they could get direct answers from government officials, by asking questions, that way the whole school

is attending the event that would hit a wider audience and probably get more out of it, more productive that way as opposed to a smaller sort of meetings.'

- 'I think it's a good thing to do it with a big audience but it's better to do it in a form class instead of an assembly because in assemblies' people can be disturbing, and it can be distracting, instead of in a form class where less people to make distractions and the teacher can see who it is.'

Feedback through surveys

- 'As much as I don't like them, surveys are useful tools.'
- 'we get them in registration where you are tired and only have 10 mins. We can't be bothered so don't try that hard.'
- 'The surveys could allow pictures or recordings to be uploaded so people don't have to write.'
- 'With surveys you can reach like a big like a wide range of people, but instead of just the government getting back the results, maybe having a group of young people who could talk back the results to other young people about the ideas and feedback, maybe it could make more of an impact and be more personal in depth.'
- 'When consulting, I think, a good thing maybe is doing it through surveys. Maybe surveys for young people on maybe what they want or what is their opinion on a new issue.'
- 'We could have monthly check-in type surveys to get young peoples latest views on things.'
- 'Maybe they could be like more surveys out to young people and children all across Wales to just get their opinions and hopefully government will take those opinions into account.'
- 'Surveys to say what we think needs to be done to meet the challenges and children's rights. Children may want government to be, let's say a little bit more focused on climate change or becoming maybe more a little bit more eco-friendly.'
- 'We could create our own surveys to get our point across.'

Feedback through school reps.

- 'I'd say an actual appointed pupil within a school who is there to gather political input from young people. This person could be part of the student council who could then get these opinions out to the right people.'

Feedback through existing Welsh Government staff:

- 'Welsh Government do have youth workers that come into all schools across Wales, they could promote Welsh Government's work and discover young people's opinions as well as.'

Use suggestion boxes:

- So maybe just a sort of a suggestions box, but there's a question at that. And then you can put your answer in.

Use direct democracy

- 'Direct democracy needs to be used.'
- 'Some young people would like to give feedback directly through video.'

Complaint / petition website for young people.

- 'I think there should be a direct line for complains.'
- 'There should be a young people's petition page.'
- 'I think it might be a good idea if there is something that you don't agree with in the Welsh Parliament, that people could set up online petitions.'

Feedback box.

- 'I would like a feedback box where you could directly give feedback to the Welsh Government'

Inform Welsh Government, directly, through videos or using letters and emails.

- A number of participants felt that informing Welsh Government in writing or email was a good technique because people could be considered in their views and there was a paper trail.

Youth MS Surgeries.

- A well-informed participant said:
- 'Why don't politicians do youth surgeries? They could even do these at schools.'
- 'We should go directly to their office. They all have a local office.'

Question 6: How can we make sure that the Welsh and English languages are treated equally?

General comments:

- 'I think that the English should learn Welsh.'
- 'Everything should be bilingual.'
- 'There should also be closed captions as well.'
- 'Welsh should be taught better and include heritage.'
- 'Kind of just the normal standard of making sure that everything's available in both languages, easily, and held on the same level.'
- 'Think they are treated equally in school.'
- 'People don't like learning the language and don't understand why it's important, we should teach people why they should learn it and not just because they have to.'
- 'By my age, I should know more about Welsh culture, but I don't.'
- 'I think it's really good already.'

When considering language in the widest sense:

- 'The question is about English and Welsh but it's important to think about the other languages as well. A lot of other nationalities that live in Wales. That may be what struggle with English as well and we need to think about that BSL yes, as well as a language.'

A participant who attends a Welsh Medium school:

- 'I think it's treated equally, it's just that not many people in Cardiff speak it... I agree with that.'

A group of young learning-disabled people:

- 'More Welsh Schools and more options to learn Welsh after school. Being greeted in Welsh at youth club – Bora Da!!'