

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and Education Committee

Hynt y gwaith gan Lywodraeth Cymru wrth ddatblygu Cwricwlwm newydd Cymru | Welsh Government's progress in developing the new Curriculum for Wales

CR 20

Ymateb gan: Shelter Cymru
Response from: Shelter Cymru

Shelter Cymru Education Service are a listed stakeholder for the new Curriculum for Wales, representing members of our Shelter Cymru Education Advisory Group. Our Education Advisory Group, established in 2001, have representatives from the statutory, voluntary and private sectors who have an interest in leaving home education.

As a collective voice on leaving home education, Shelter Cymru Education Service wish to provide written evidence on the Welsh Government's progress in developing the new Curriculum for Wales, focusing on the following two areas:

1. The steps being taken to ensure the new Curriculum for Wales complements other Welsh Government priorities.
2. How the development of the new Curriculum for Wales is aligning with the development of the new national professional learning for teachers.

Welsh Government have the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 legislations and the Positive Pathway to Adulthood Framework, all of which highlights housing as a priority for the Welsh Government. Our education service is built to reflect these and the Curriculum Reform team have indeed recognised the importance of homelessness prevention and independent living education in their progress in developing the new Curriculum for Wales.

In relation to the four purposes of the new Curriculum for Wales, the Curriculum Reform team have identified that two of the purposes where learners should develop as 'healthy, confident individuals...' And 'ethical informed citizens...' both of which are appropriate to the work of Shelter Cymru. There could be opportunities for learners to consider homelessness and the importance of financial independence within this realm.

Shelter Cymru Education Service are happy with this recognition because we and our education advisory group members feel that universal education to the next generation around homelessness prevention and independent living is crucial to ensure a successful transition to adulthood; and the new Curriculum for Wales presents an unique opportunity to achieve this.

Our survey on 'Early Homelessness Prevention Education across Wales' in October 2018 (summary attached) provides evidence that highlights the importance of embedding youth homelessness prevention through education in core curriculum, and we recommend that this continues to be taken into consideration in the development of the new Curriculum for Wales.

One of the key actions recommended from our survey is that we need to continue our stakeholder engagement with the developments of the New Curriculum for Wales and address the need for core elements of housing and homelessness to form some part of core curriculum. To support this, developing materials that are promoted and readily available would provide teaching professionals with the required resources to deliver universal messaging through the PSE framework, collapsed timetables, assemblies and other enrichment opportunities.

In relation to how the development of the new Curriculum for Wales is aligning with the development of the new national professional learning for teachers, linking with the Higher Education sector to better inform our future teachers who are undertaking their PGCE courses would link particularly well alongside the development of the New Curriculum for Wales. Bangor University have already expressed an interest in exploring the inclusion of Shelter Cymru's Education work within their trainee teachers Professional Studies as part of their PGCE studies. This is an area that has not been explored before, so this is the right opportunity to advance with this area of work.

We very much value this opportunity to feed into your consultation to Welsh Government's progress in developing the new Curriculum for Wales and for considering our paper(s) as evidence in response to your consultation.

Summary of early homelessness prevention education across Wales

October 2018

1 Shelter Cymru Education Service: Our role in early homelessness prevention education.

At Shelter Cymru, we believe that every young person in Wales deserves a place to live.

Shelter Cymru Education Service is Wales wide and funded by the Welsh Government to deliver an early homelessness prevention service through Education to alleviate youth homelessness across Wales.

In 2018, Shelter Cymru Education led, in collaboration with its Education Advisory Group members who represent the statutory, voluntary and private sectors across Wales, a bilingual mapping exercise to continue to identify early homelessness prevention through education interventions that currently exist across Wales.

The findings from this short analysis have helped us to highlight best practice and identify gaps; gaps that evidence both an opportunity for further collaboration and expansion of education service to achieve a successful leaving home experience for all young people across Wales.

2 Mapping homelessness prevention education

The mapping exercise was conducted online through Survey Monkey, and was kept short but relevant seeking to identify the following:

1. What education interventions are delivered across Wales to alleviate youth homelessness
2. Where and how such interventions are delivered
3. Who organisations were working with, if any, to deliver their interventions.
4. The need for accredited training for both organisations and those young people in which they serve.

In addressing the above questions, we are able to create a general picture of existing youth homelessness prevention through education across Wales. Importantly, we are also able to

identify and evidence gaps in the current delivery of youth homelessness prevention through education across Wales.

Survey Scope

The survey was shared at the Education Advisory Group meeting in June 2018 for members to circulate through their networks and encourage completion. The survey was also circulated through educational settings and via Shelter Cymru's Social Media platforms. As an integral steering group member of the End Youth Homelessness Campaign, the survey has also been circulated through this network.

Responses

In total, the survey returned 50 completed responses representing organisations from the Voluntary, Third, Statutory and Private Sectors.

Setting	Number
Local Authorities	15
Voluntary / Third Sector	9
Primary Schools	8
Secondary / FE	8
Higher Education	1
Community / Care	3
NHS	1
Private	1
Other	4

3 Where is early homelessness prevention education delivered in Wales?

The survey returned responses from organisations across the whole of Wales, including 15 local authorities. Even from this short survey of responses, we can evidence with some confidence that there is some form of education to prevent youth homelessness in every Local Authority in Wales.

Mid Wales region of Ceredigion and Powys highlighted the need for better awareness of early homelessness prevention through education. As Ceredigion County Borough Council commented *"A 'Roadshow' could be developed in partnership with Education, Social Services, Housing & Third Sector to reach ALL of Wales."*

4 Who delivers early homelessness prevention education in Wales?

As highlighted in the survey responses, early homelessness prevention through education is delivered in various forms by different organisations across sectors.

Shelter Cymru, whose education service is funded by Welsh Government, develops and delivers universal and targeted information around housing and homelessness across various settings in Wales, both proactively and upon request, dependant on capacity.

Llamau provide young people with more targeted education to support those who are most vulnerable and have evidenced achievement of positive outcomes for young people. Their community outreach, however, is for the south-east corner of Wales.

Whilst this survey returned responses by a total of **17** school / FE establishments, it is clear that they rely heavily on the Third / Voluntary sector to deliver this type of education. For example, Ruthin and Denbigh High Schools stated that they rely on the project called “Going it Alone” who deliver information, advice, awareness and accredited training to their learners.

Some of the Third Sector organisations providing early homelessness prevention through education highlighted in this summary are:

- Shelter Cymru (pan-Wales)
- CWVYS (pan-Wales)
- Llamau (south-east Wales)
- GISDA (north Wales)
- Digartref (north Wales)
- Going-it-Alone (north Wales)
- Hafan Cymru (north Wales)
- Solas Cymru (south Wales)
- Swansea YMCA (south Wales)

Whilst CWVYS do not directly provide early homelessness prevention through education services, they do represent many of the Third Sector organisations highlighted in this summary and actively promote each one’s services to youth work practitioners across Wales.

We also returned a survey completion from Bangor University who expressed their interest following early discussions with Shelter Cymru about the possibility of introducing early homelessness prevention education workshops to their trainee teachers as part of their PGCE Professional Studies.

5 In what settings is early homelessness prevention through education delivered in Wales?

Nearly **60%** of survey respondents said that they deliver across secondary schools and Further Education settings. However, as previously mentioned, this delivery is largely dependent on Third Sector organisations. To address this in the future, as one secondary teacher said *“Youth homelessness education in Wales can be improved if it is taught in schools before young people leave education, especially by targeting those most vulnerable.”*

To achieve this, of course, such education would need to be part of core curriculum as another secondary teacher commented *“...such important education needs linking into new curriculum development.”* This comment is in relation to the New Curriculum for Wales, for

which Shelter Cymru are a stakeholder, and will continue to work to evidence the need for housing education to form a part of this development.

22% of respondents represented primary school teachers, which is interesting because evidence suggests that such education is few and far between within this part of the curriculum, yet teachers from this survey feel it is important in future homelessness prevention that children in Key Stages 1 & 2 are educated about housing and homelessness. As one teacher said *"...more sessions need to be delivered in schools by frontline services to address the myths surrounding homelessness."* This is a fair comment yet frontline services of the Third Sector in particular do not have the capacity to provide such education across all primary schools in Wales.

To address the above, another primary teacher commented in the survey that *"...an assembly presentation for schools to use would be very helpful."* Prior to circulating the survey, Shelter Cymru have developed a generic 'myth-busting' assembly presentation that can be used by primary and/or secondary schools moving forward.

From our survey, it is clear that more early homelessness prevention education needs to be delivered across Pupil Referral Units, with only **14%** of respondents providing such education within this setting.

6 What early homelessness prevention education is delivered across Wales?

Over **50%** of all organisations provide information & advice sessions across the aforementioned settings previously discussed. This is generally delivered via school talks to raise awareness of homelessness in general, and addresses universal delivery more than targeted delivery.

Only 12% of respondents develop and provide toolkits and/or resources for professionals. When we consider the how much early homelessness prevention through education is delivered within schools and the highlighted need by teaching professionals for resources, clearly this needs to be a priority for all of us working in this realm to ensure such resources are promoted and readily available.

We have identified from this survey that pre-tenancy training is being delivered by some organisations in Wales. For example, Charter Housing, who cover the south-east of Wales, provide pre-tenancy training to those on the housing register under-25. This training used to be accredited by Agored Cymru but *"this has unfortunately stopped due to funding but keen to re-establish accreditation."*

This last comment by Charter Housing is reflected in the survey responses where less than **20%** of organisations provide accredited training to young people, and **10%** of those are referencing Shelter Cymru's Housemate accreditation.

7 The need for recognised & accredited training & early homelessness prevention education.

78% of respondents expressed an interest in wishing to provide accredited training to young people on housing and homelessness. Providing recognised training and qualifications for young people around housing and homelessness is difficult, as referenced by one organisation who commented that *"...a lack of funding for both accreditation and staff training make it difficult for us to provide recognised qualifications to our young people."*

Another organisation said that *"funding for recognised training on leaving home education need to be mid to long term as it takes time to establish broad and consistent delivery."*

The most recognised accredited qualification available to young people in Wales is currently Shelter Cymru's Housemate, which is a Level 2 qualification (equivalent to a GCSE A-C), accredited by Agored Cymru. To overcome the barriers faced by some organisations in providing a formal qualifications to young people on housing matters, particularly the most vulnerable, providing one universal qualification e.g. Housemate through all Third Sector organisations would be the most feasible option to deliver a broad and consistent qualification to young people across Wales.

As highlighted by one organisation, practitioners would require the necessary training to enable them to deliver a universal accreditation to young people on housing matters. Through steering groups such as End Youth Homelessness Campaign and Shelter Cymru's lead role in our Education Advisory Group, together through collaboration we can overcome these barriers and address the need for recognised accredited training to give young people the best possible chance of success upon leaving home / care and transition to independent living.

8 What are the examples of collaborative working that exists in the delivery of early homelessness prevention through education?

Bridgend County Borough Council fund a project called 'Emphasis' which targets young people who are not in education, training or employment (NEET) from the age of 14+ to prevent homelessness occurring. They achieve this by working with young person mediators across the borough and its schools and non-mainstream education settings to provide homelessness awareness sessions, whilst also working with supported accommodation providers where a need is identified.

In north Wales, the 'Go It Alone' project works in partnership with Conwy / Denbighshire Local Authorities, Shelter Cymru, Agored Cymru, North Wales Housing, Social Services, schools, Coleg Llandrillo and alternative accreditation providers to deliver the Housemate accreditation to young people who are identified as at most risk of youth homelessness. Its success has seen over 100 young people being accredited with a Level 2 in a housing qualification, equipping them for the realities of independent living and ensuring they are better informed to make a successful transition to a positive pathway to adulthood.

9 Next steps

The summary of this short survey highlights four key priorities moving forward with early homelessness prevention through education in Wales:

1. We need to continue working with our partners to ensure that we all agree, and have capacity, to deliver a universally recognised accredited qualification to young people to ensure a broad and consistent delivery is maintained throughout Wales. To achieve this, youth work practitioners in particular require upskilling to be able to competently and consistently deliver the qualification. Seeking additional funding to support practitioner training for accredited delivery to young people is needed.
2. Delivery of education around homelessness prevention needs further co-ordination between partners and more readily delivered within Pupil Referral Units and Special Educational Needs departments. This short survey has highlighted a gap in provision for these vulnerable groups of young people, and we are confident that establishing this area as one of our priorities moving forward will greatly assist us in preventing youth homelessness in the future.
3. We need to continue our stakeholder engagement with the developments of the New Curriculum for Wales and address the need for core elements of housing and homelessness to form some part of core curriculum. To support this, developing materials that are promoted and readily available would provide teaching professionals with the required resources to deliver universal messaging through the PSE framework, collapsed timetables, assemblies and other enrichment opportunities. In doing, so, Third Sector organisations and Local Authorities can put more focus in the targeted delivery of early homelessness prevention education.
4. Linking with the Higher Education sector to better inform our future teachers who are undertaking their PGCE courses would link particularly well alongside the development of the New Curriculum for Wales. This is an area that has not been explored before, so this is the right opportunity to advance with this area of work.

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