

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**  
**Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg**  
**Minister for Education and Welsh Language**



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1180  
Ein cyf/Our ref JMEWL/10797/21

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions committee  
Senedd Cymru  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

3 August 2021

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 22 July to inform me about a petition the Committee received which is currently collecting signatures to increase the teaching and information available on substance misuse in Welsh secondary schools.

The new [Curriculum for Wales](#), which is due to be introduced from September 2022 will include a [Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience \(Area\)](#) which has equal status in law to the five other area of the curriculum. It will enhance the new curriculum's focus on the health and well-being of learners which includes substance misuse.

This innovative new Area provides a holistic structure for understanding health and well-being and is concerned with developing the capacity of learners to navigate life's opportunities and challenges. The fundamental components of the Area are physical health and development, mental health and emotional and social well-being. It will support learners to understand and appreciate how the different components of health and well-being are interconnected recognising that good health and well-being are important to enable successful learning.

Within this Area it is important that there is a sufficient degree of flexibility to support learners. The 'descriptions of learning' in the guidance for each Area includes key learning and details how learners should progress as they journey through the continuum of learning. A Description of Learning under the 'Developing physical health and well-being has lifelong benefits' statement of What Matters specifically relates to enabling learners to "..... Learn how the brain works and can help learners understand their thoughts, feelings and emotions. How lifestyle choices can impact the human body (including diet, substance misuse and exercise)."

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

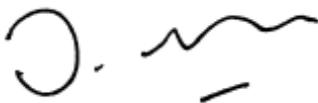
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Learners are also supported to develop their understanding to be able to not only understand and recognise the connections between physical and emotional changes that occur, but to be able to adapt and modify behaviour to support their physical and emotional health. The ‘Developing Physical health and well-being as lifelong benefits’ statement of What Matters also has a description of learning which enables learners to “recognise some of the behaviours, conditions and situations that affect my physical health and well-being, and I know how to respond and get help in a safe way” which will support learners to develop knowledge and understanding on how to manage behaviours and conditions.

The Welsh Government has supported the Wales Police Schools Programme (WPSP) since 2004. We invest £1.98m, each year, which is match funded by the four Welsh Police Forces. The programme involves Police Officers going into schools and delivering lessons on a range of areas. The programme was originally established to reduce the number of young entrants into the criminal justice system and tackle substance misuse issues. Over the years, the programme has evolved by broadening its scope to cover wider community and personal safety issues at all key stages of the curriculum. The core programme includes substance misuse, anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, bullying, online safety, sexting, child sexual exploitation and consent, delivering a balanced programme within primary and secondary schools. It focuses 50% on delivering the core content to meet the needs of pupils and schools and 50% with proactive interventions on safeguarding and incident management.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'J' followed by a series of wavy lines and a short horizontal stroke at the end.

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**

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