

CYPE(6)-09-22 - Paper to note 17

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

Children, Young People and Education Committee

Lee Waters MS
Deputy Minister for Climate Change

Jeremy Miles MS
Minister for Education and Welsh Language

22 April 2022

Online Safety Bill

Dear colleagues,

During a discussion about the Children, Young People and Education Committee's forward work programme during our meeting of 31 March 2022, Members considered a range of issues relating to the impact of social media on the lives of children and young people.

While we recognise its many benefits, we remain concerned about the impact of social media and inappropriate online content on the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Much of the evidence we are currently receiving in relation to peer on peer sexual harassment among learners highlights the role of social media in providing a platform for sexual harassment, and the negative implications of age-inappropriate online content for some young people's relationships and sexual behaviour.

As you will know, the Online Safety Bill is currently having its second reading in the House of Commons. Please can you set out:

- i. the Welsh Government's views on the principal clauses of the Online Safety Bill;
- ii. the extent to which the Welsh Government has engaged with the UK Government in relation to the Bill (either during its development or after it was introduced) and the nature of that engagement;

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- iii. whether the Welsh Government intends to push the UK Government for any specific amendments to the Bill as it passes through UK Parliament;
- iv. whether, in light of the Online Safety Bill or otherwise, you intend to update the Welsh Government's **digital resilience in education action plan to protect children and young people online** which was last updated in April 2021 (for example by recording progress against the actions listed within that plan), and when you intend to do so.
- v. your views on calls from NSPCC Cymru for a new Online Safety Plan, exclusively focussed on children and young people, that takes a cross-sector approach spanning: health, education, law enforcement, social services, youth services, education, industry and the third sector.

I would be grateful for this information no later than Friday 27 May 2022.

Yours sincerely,



Jayne Bryant MS

Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.