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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Jayne Bryant MS,
Welsh Parliament,
Cardiff,
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E-mail:

12 July 2022

Dear Jayne,

During the Children, Young People & Education Committee's session on 'Peer-on-Peer Sexual Harassment Among Young Learners' held on the 4th May, the Minister for Social Justice agreed that information would be provided to the Committee about the Police led review of the Wales Police Schools Programme (WPSP). This has been passed to me for reply as the WPSP falls within my portfolio.

Attached to this letter is a summary report of the review which was conducted in 2019. Officials are currently working closely with the Police on implementing the recommendations. There is an Operational Board in place on the programme which also considers the progress being made against the recommendations. This is chaired by the Police and includes a range of stakeholders, including relevant policy representatives from Welsh Government departments. There is also a strategic board in place, chaired by Welsh Government, where updates and key issues are escalated from the Operational Board, both on the operation of the programme and updates on the implementation of the recommendations.

Yours sincerely

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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.



RHAGLEN YSGOLION

Heddlu Cymru

Wales Police

SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

Wales Police Schools Programme Future Vision and Proposals

Summary of findings and recommendations from 2019 review

The Wales Police Schools programme has been developed in recognition of the role that schools and education can play in tackling antisocial behaviour, substance misuse and problems associated with personal safety. The programme is mainly preventative generalised and broad-based one that is focussed on formal lessons delivered by uniformed police in the classroom, together with supportive policing activities. Aims of the programme are:-

- work towards achieving a reduction in crime and disorder in the young of our communities,
- through the medium of education and promote the principles of positive citizenship in schools and their wider communities.

A joint review was carried out and commissioned by Police & Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables of Wales following discussions with Welsh Government and an exercise to discover the views of key partners, including head teachers and pupils.



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Conclusions, Recommendations and The Fresh Vision for the Wales Police Schools Programme

The conclusions contained within the report were based on an Operational Review undertaken within each of the four Welsh Forces to assess current arrangements and discover the views of all those involved in the programme. This was set out in three distinct sections, firstly the desktop literature review, the second comprised of interviews and focus groups and the third section, electronic surveys were sent to children and teachers in both primary and secondary schools.

Evidence captured from the review is that the Police Schools Programme is highly valued, having police officers within schools was a high and positive impact and there is considerable evidence and benefits in maintaining the presence of Police Officers within schools across Wales. The programme aligns itself to early intervention and prevention approach that is at the heart of policing. The review highlights the need to keep pace with legislative and curriculum developments led by Welsh Government and the way in which Policing in Wales has entered into new partnerships and tackled big issues in ways that respect the different communities and variable challenges across Wales but benefit from collaboration and shared learning. Another theme identified within the review is that the programme has provided an opportunity to divert children away from criminality and entering the Criminal Justice System.

It is recognised that in order for the programme to maintain its standing it needs to evolve and keep pace with changes in policing which has become more complex and education which also faces challenges of a complex society. Although positives are highlighted the report set out advice and a series of recommendations for Policing in Wales and Welsh Government endorsement.

The areas identified through the review process are grouped into 6 thematic areas, these are:-

- Governance
- Curriculum
- Interactions with Children and Schools
- Operational Policing
- Recruitment, Training and Supervision of School Police Officers
- Monitoring of the programme/schoolbeat website/technology

Within each of these thematic areas there are further detailed recommendations listed that address the priorities, in total 25.

These 25 recommendations have been included in the Wales Police Schools Programme delivery plan which is a live document and continues to be reviewed by the Implementation Board of the delivery against these recommendations.

GOVERNANCE:

- 1 There is a need for a clear governance structure of the programme at national, regional and local level, tied into local and the all-Wales arrangements agreed between Policing and Welsh Government and the local ownership recommended earlier in this report.
- 2 There needs to be closer alignment of the programme to the priorities of Policing in Wales and priorities of Welsh Government. Local arrangements should link to neighbourhood policing, Early Action Together and officers serving in Youth Offending Teams etc.
- 3 The Policing Partnership Board for Wales should establish an Implementation Board to drive the development of this Programme, involving senior representatives of relevant Ministers as well as Commissioners and Chief Constables and other partners. The aim should be to implement the proposals by September 2020.
- 4 There also needs to be consistent line management of the programme in each of the four Welsh forces, to provide clarity about vision and outcomes and to allow the sharing of experience and reports on implementation and practical arrangements.

CURRICULUM

- 5 The Implementation Board will make way for a Curriculum & Oversight Board to develop the programme/curriculum and propose changes and amendments as needed. This should be a simple action-orientated Board reporting to the All-Wales Policing Partnership Board.
- 6 The Curriculum and Oversight Board will be required to take an analytical approach to supplement stakeholder input to ensure that an intelligence-led evidence-based approach is adopted in future lesson design and delivery. It should have a process to allow feedback on individual lesson content.
- 7 The purpose and nature of the Programme should be communicated in clear simple language with a simple title – Wales Police Schools Programme – rather than initials.

INTERACTION WITH CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS

- 8 The Programme should adopt a more targeted approach to children who are more likely to be at risk of entering the criminal justice system. This would include those who are disengaged or excluded and those who have been subject to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). It would involve increased engagement with Pupil Referral Units. A joint review of the service currently provided to Pupil Referral Units should be undertaken to identify potential benefits to education, policing and other agencies of an enhanced and targeted service to these units along with considering other ways of working with children who are difficult to manage in the school environment, with consideration to the resource requirements of that potential contribution.

- 9 The Programme should consolidate the change in focus from a predominantly lesson-based approach to a balanced and more pastoral all-school approach which has clear links to local neighbourhood teams and other appropriate partners.
- 10 A more compact core framework should focus on identified areas of threat, risk and harm. Currently, for example, we would expect a focus on serious violence, knife crime and county lines but this may change over time and there may be variations in the priorities in different areas.
- 11 Consideration should be given to best practice from the engagement of Police Officers in schools providing restorative interventions or conducting reparation meeting in the school environment.
- 12 The Implementation Board must work closely with our partners in education and collaborate with other partner agencies who deliver messages within the school environment to avoid duplication and ensure relevance to the new education curriculum that is currently being rolled out.
- 13 The inception of a more formalised delivery of key messages to a younger audience must be aligned to evidence demonstrating emerging threat and risk (subject to external expert guidance on age relevancy via the Implementation/Curriculum Board). This should involve local Community Support Officers as part of a wider team approach.
- 14 There needs to be the development of a framework for important messages delivered by the Schools Police Officers to be reinforced by the wider police family.

OPERATIONAL POLICING

- 15 There should be consistently improved collaboration between Police Officers in the Programme and operational police officers at all levels across the four forces, supported by supervisors.
- 16 Schools Police Officers should work more closely alongside Neighbourhood Policing Teams and other local partners to develop opportunities around early intervention, prevention and information sharing.
- 17 Schools Police Officers need to be used more often and more systematically as an operational problem-solving resource for issues involving children and young people in addition to partner agencies such as Youth Offending Service, Local Authority and Early Action Together.
- 18 Consideration should be given to continuity of support and engagement with young people during school holidays.

RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND SUPERVISION OF SCHOOL POLICE OFFICERS

- 19 There should be a consistent training plan for Police Officers moving into the role which should be seen as part of their continued professional development and must include appropriate and timely operational content
- 20 There should be development of a work based assessment/accreditation process for Schools Police Officers.

- 21 It is important for Police Officers seconded into the Schools role to maintain operational credibility and knowledge, and to be encouraged to see the secondment as relevant to their ambition for progression and promotion within the Police Service. With that in mind it is suggested that tenure in the role should normally be 2 years – with an extension of up to a further 12 months on one or at most two occasions and only for valid operational reasons. These are decisions for each Force whose reasoning needs to be explicit and explained well to head teachers and other partners
- 22 Induction, initial training and support for officers moving into the role needs to be highly developed, with a period of introduction and handover protected explicitly within the new arrangements.

MONITORING OF THE PROGRAMME/SCHOOLBEAT WEBSITE/TECHNOLOGY

- 23 There should be a change in the performance framework for the Programme from an output-focused system to one which has outcomes as its basis. This should be agreed by the Implementation Board and monitored by a Chief Officer and Commissioner's representative in each Force. An annual report should be produced for the Board, outlining achievements and challenges in the year
- 24 A task and finish group should be formed to review the SchoolBeat website and explore opportunities for a more sustainable technology-based approach.
- 25 There should be a consistent approach to incident recording against agreed criteria on the SchoolBeat website.