

Mudiad Meithrin is the main provider of Welsh medium care and education in the voluntary sector through a national network of cylchoedd meithrin, Ti a Fi cycles, wrapcare and Welsh medium day nurseries.

Mudiad Meithrin was established in 1971. Our main goal is to give every young child in Wales the opportunity to access early years services and experiences through the medium of Welsh. We also believe that it is important to ensure that every child has the opportunity to benefit from experiences and early years activities in their local community.

When Mudiad started in 1971 it had around 50 cylchoedd. Nowadays, it has grown tremendously and there are about 1000 Cylchoedd Meithrin, Cylchoedd Ti a Fi, 'Cymraeg for Kids' groups and nurseries under the Mudiad Meithrin banner. These provide early years experiences to around 22,000 children per week. In addition, the Mudiad works very closely with parents to provide help and advice to enable them to develop and support the work of the cylchoedd within the home.

As a result, we work with children and families from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. We are working in partnership with the Flying Start programme to provide opportunities in the most deprived areas. We also work with the local education authorities to offer part-time education places for 3 year olds in their local community.

In addition, our Cam wrth Gam subsidiary company provides Welsh-medium training for early years qualifications through our national training plan. This is done by working with secondary schools to provide courses for school pupils, and through national training schemes. Training based on work-based learning is provided by a network of tutors, assessors and internal verifiers across Wales. Er mwyn cyflawni hyn, mae Mudiad Meithrin yn elusen gofrestredig sy'n cyflogi dros 200 o bobl, yn staff cenedlaethol a sirol ac mewn meithrinfeydd dydd, gyda 2000 o staff ychwanegol yn gweithio yn y cylchoedd ei hunain.

The cylchoedd are supported by a national network of professional staff advising them on a range of issues, for example promoting good practice, staff training and liaison with Local Authorities. In addition, the Mudiad works very closely with parents to provide help and advice to enable them to develop and support the work of the cylchoedd in the home.

As a voluntary organisation Mudiad Meithrin faces and deals with many of the issues already identified by other third sector organisations in response to this call for evidence. These have been voiced by others throughout the consultation process undertaken by the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee to date.

Recognising this, many of our messages will be familiar to the committee and will complement and support the concerns and considerations previously identified in past reports.

As an organisation Mudiad Meithrin has benefited significantly in the past of financial investment which was instrumental to the development of Mudiad Meithrin and contributes to the strength of the Mudiad today. Over the past twenty five years Mudiad Meithrin received capital funding towards the cost of opening up 2 integrated children's centers. Hundreds of students have been trained and achieved childcare vocational courses supported by European grants. We have also built bridges with colleagues across Europe that work in the field of promoting the use of minority languages in the early years.

Ensure that the issues that are most important to Wales are adequately represented in the discussions

From the point of view of your investigation, we share anxiety with of the Committee found in the External Affairs and Additional Legislation (EAAL) Committee's report in June 2017 'The Great Repeal Bill White Paper: Implications for Wales for the White Paper'

We agree that the lack of consultation on behalf of the UK government with Wales is unacceptable. We welcome the strong views of the Welsh Government and the Scottish Government on this issue and their efforts to enforce full consideration for delegated powers to make Welsh subordinate legislation following the Big Repeal Bill. There is a detailed analysis and suggestions in the AEEL Committee report 'UK governance post-Brexit'. Implementing these recommendations would provide a robust infrastructure for the relationships between UK governments after leaving the EU.

Our aim in Mudiad Meithrin is to try to ensure that every child in Wales has the opportunity to learn Welsh in the early years. So for us, it is important that the language is given worthy attention and is represented as one of the most important issues for Wales during the negotiations about leaving the EU. The Welsh Language Commissioner has voiced concerns that leaving the European Union:

- *undermine the provision of programmes and projects in Wales that are fundamental to creating skilled bilingual workforce and supporting the use of Welsh in the community and in business; and*
- *impact on economic sectors that are important to Welsh speakers and to a large extent sustain Welsh speaking communities*

We are in agreement with the Welsh Language Commissioner:

'In that regard, I would argue that the extent of the economic impact of Brexit on the Welsh language should be recognised in connection with other sectors of the economy, such as creative industries and post-16 education, as well as specific programmes and projects that have potential to combine economic and linguistic benefits. Following on from that, it is essential that

the Government, as a matter of urgency, makes plans to mitigate the detrimental effects on the Welsh language and those who use it.

Identifying opportunities to continue to engage with the European Union and its institutions after leaving the Union.

Taking into account the report of the EAALCommittee 'How is the Welsh Government preparing for Brexit? Mudiad Meithrin would like to offer the following comments:

We strongly agree with Recommendation 4 that the Welsh Government should give clear and accessible leadership to businesses, public organisations and the third sector on what the implications of different EU exit sceanrios, including what a "no deal" situation could mean for the institutions. Organisations and public bodies will need time to plan and assess the risks to their work and services. We also agree with the committee's view that public services and third sector organisations do not have the information we need to **prepare adequately for leaving the EU.**

Identifying opportunities to continue to engage with the European Union and its institutions after leaving the Union.

We also wish to support comments made by the Wales Council for Voluntary Action noted in part in the report 'How is the Welsh Government preparing for Brexit' about children's rights and human rights. As an organisation who believe in, and implements children's rights, it is worrying to see the rise in xenophobic attitudes that have led to the decline in attitudes that respect equality and understanding among people from different backgrounds. We welcome the fact that this is the subject of invetsigations by the Senedd's Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee.

We also agree with the Committee that on leaving the EU there should be no weakening on employment protections and equality legislation. This is extremely important for Mudiad Meithrin as an organisation where 90% of our employees are female.

We have already referred to the sharing of ideas and experiences that have occurred historically between us in Wales and our sister countries across Europe. As a result of the European Union, there was a flourishing of networks and transnational projects which gave the opportunity to share good practice and innovation. It would be good to see continued investment to share good practice and build relationships with organisations and bodeis across Europe in future for the purpose of learning from each other. The list of projects that facilitated this is too long to be named here. As a country that promotes minority language growth it is crucial we continue to learn and share the expertise of other countries across Europe that seek to restore and promote other minority languages.