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Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref KW/00602/18

Sally Holland
Children's Commissioner for Wales
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9 March 2018

Dear Sally Holland

Thank you for your letter of 22 February on whole-school approaches to protecting and promoting learner well-being, and the need to ensure that links are in place between the T4CYP programme and the education reform agenda.

My officials have and continue to work with the T4CYP resilience and early intervention work stream. Since the establishment of the new group in T4CYP, the vice chair, and soon to be chair, is Nichola Jones, who is also a member of the Association of Directors of Education Wales' Inclusion and School Improvement Group. This is in addition to membership from senior Public Health Wales (PHW) officials and WLGA youth service leaders to ensure the programme is sighted on, and works in coordination with the education reforms and the other wider public health programmes. In addition a specific work group looking at management of deliberate self harm and suicide for schools and other child professionals has been held by the Talk to Me 2 programme.

PHW have agreed to pull together a meeting of leads from across public health. These include the Welsh Network of Healthy Schools, Healthy Child Wales, ACE Support Hub, Youth Justice and trauma recovery experts, academic experts on parental conflict and education leads. The aim is to work together to develop a shared model of care and management of children that builds on the complementary aspects that each programme provides. In due course, this should ensure there is consistency in the way we support children and families across Wales.

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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.

Whilst the work of ensuring join up between officials and policy makers has developed, there is clearly a lot to do to translate this on the ground i.e. ensuring regional and local planning in each area have appropriate focus on children and young people and then ensure health, social care and education practitioners and leaders are appropriately engaged.

As regards the development of work on the ground between practitioners, the schools based CAMHS in reach pilot programme will contribute towards professional join up. Moreover, the guidance for primary mental health and specialist mental health services, released over the past year, will help with consultation, liaison training and support. These are once again key elements of the range of services to be provided by specialist mental health practitioners. It is intended that delivery of these services will take place over the next 12 months as the waiting list targets are more reliably met.

I agree that what children learn in the classroom should be reflected across the wider learning environment in schools. This is the concept behind the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes (WNHSS). The WNHSS National Quality Award (NQA) has been in place since 2010, and assesses a whole school approach to a range of health topics, of which mental and emotional health and well-being is one.

Schools are supported locally to develop such an approach, and can be independently assessed for the NQA after 9 years' involvement. Over 99% of maintained schools are actively involved in the scheme, and to date 158 have achieved the National Quality Award. Further details can be found at <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/page/82249>

PHW runs the WNHSS on behalf of Welsh Government. PHW officers have been actively involved in both the TfCYP resilience and early intervention workstream, and in the working group for the Health and Well-being AOLE. The approach of the AoLE reflects this existing work.

I hope this information reassures you that links are in place between the T4CYP programme and the education reform agenda.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams'.

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