



Supporting document for petition:

“We ask the National Assembly for Wales to apply pressure on the Welsh Assembly Government to include leaving home information and education in the national curriculum”

Context

This petition has been developed by young people currently taking part in Shelter Cymru volunteering projects (Foot in the Door and Peer Learning), the Power of the Voice movement in Cardiff (The Gathering) and with support from Barnardo's BAYS project, Llamau and Cardiff Youth Services. Shelter Cymru's Education Service is coordinating this campaign.

We all believe learning about the importance of housing and the impact of homelessness should be an integral part of every young person's education and personal development.

Homelessness is included, albeit very briefly, in the Key Stage 4 PSE framework (introduced in 2008). We do not believe that this goes far enough in ensuring that young people learn about the implications of living independently and this is why we feel a bolder move is necessary, by calling for leaving home education to be included as a curriculum topic in its own right.

Leaving Home education and information – what does it involve?

This type of education should not be regarded as concentrating solely on homelessness and the more negative aspects associated with leaving home. All areas of leaving home and preparing to leave are considered. This includes financial capabilities, independent living skills in their entirety, where and how to access accommodation as well as managing tenancies and utilities. An awareness of how family mediation works with young people to build bridges with families is also a key component of leaving home education. Heightened community awareness and an element of good citizenship is also included as it is useful in helping young people integrate into communities to sustain tenancies. Leaving home education also involves looking at nutrition and healthy meal planning as well as more general topics such as self esteem and confidence building.

Current approaches and resources

This type of preventative work is currently being carried out in secondary schools across different areas in Wales. Local projects, run by third sector organisations or in collaboration with Local Authority departments, and generic teaching resources are delivered and promoted in schools. The Welsh Assembly Government funded Housemate teaching materials (www.housemate.org.uk) were distributed to PSE Coordinators in all secondary schools in Wales between September 2008 – October 2009. An evaluation of where and how the pack, DVD and website are being used is due in 2010.

Shelter Cymru's Education Service also coordinates and offers support to local partners wishing to develop localised or targeted projects, which link into the Housemate materials.

Shelter Cymru and the various local projects have built up an expertise in the delivery of leaving home education and would be very well-placed to offer training to teachers to ensure sustainability and to maintain consistency and quality of information disseminated to young people.

Young people's views

Young homeless people have been key in developing this petition and feel very strongly that they would have benefitted from more structured information and education on leaving home. They have also considered how leaving home education should be delivered in schools if it were included on the national curriculum. They have expressed views on when and how the information should be delivered, including the need for providing local information and making sure the right level of information is passed on.

Strategic links

We believe that information and education on leaving home has many strategic links, including:

- Convention on the Rights of the Child (articles 13, 17 and 29 in particular)
- Local Authority Children and Young People's Plans
- 10 year Homelessness Plan and Supporting People Plan

Further information

We will present the petition at a conference that highlights the importance of leaving home education and information and provides current examples of good practice.

'Leaving Home: what everyone needs to know' takes place at the Urdd City Sleepover on December 3rd.



Dogfen atodol ar gyfer y ddeiseb:

“Gofynnwn i Gynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru bwysu ar Lywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru i gynnwys gwybodaeth ac addysg am adael gartref yn y cwricwlwm cenedlaethol.”

Cyd-destun

Datblygwyd y ddeiseb hon gan bobl ifanc sy'n cymryd rhan ym mhrosiectau gwirfoddoli Shelter Cymru (Cil y Drws a Dysgu Cyfoedion) symudiad 'Power of the Voice' yng Nghaerdydd (The Gathering) a gyda chefnogaeth prosiect BAYS Barnardos, Llamau a Gwasanaeth Ieuenctid Caerdydd. Gwasanaeth Addysg Shelter Cymru sydd yn cydlynu'r ymgyrch hon.

Rydym oll yn teimlo y dylai dysgu am bwysigrwydd tai ac effaith digartrefedd fod yn rhan allweddol o addysg a datblygiad personol pob person ifanc.

Caiff digartrefedd ei gyfeirio ato'n fyr iawn yn Fframwaith ABCh Cyfnod Allweddol 4 (a gyflwynwyd yn 2008). Nid ydym yn teimlo fod hyn yn ddigon i sicrhau fod pobl ifanc yn dysgu am oblygiadau byw'n annibynnol a dyma pham y teimlwn fod angen bod yn fwy uchelgeisiol, trwy alw am gynnwys addysg ar adael gartref fel pwnc ar ben ei hun.

Beth yw addysg a gwybodaeth ar adael gartref?

Ni ddylid ystyried y math yma o addysg fel rhywbeth sy'n canolbwyntio ar ddigartrefedd yn unig a'r agweddau mwy negyddol o adael gartref. Caiff pob agwedd o adael gartref a pharatoi i wneud eu hystyried. Mae hyn yn cynnwys y gallu i ddelio ag arian, sgiliau byw annibynnol yn eu cyfanrwydd, ble a sut i gael lle, yn ogystal â rheoli tenantiaethau. Mae ymwybyddiaeth ynglŷn â sut mae cyfyngu teuluol yn gweithio hefyd yn rhan bwysig o addysg ar adael gartref. Caiff gwell ymwybyddiaeth o gymuned ac elfen o ddinasyddiaeth da eu cynnwys gan eu bod yn ddefnyddiol wrth gynorthwyo pobl ifanc i fod yn rhan o'u cymunedau ac i gadw gafael ar eu tenantiaethau. Mae addysg ar adael gartref hefyd yn ymwneud â maeth a chynllunio prydau bwyd iachus yn ogystal â phynciau mwy cyffredinol megis codi hyder a lles meddwl.

Dulliau ac adnoddau presennol

Caiff y math yma o waith ataliol ei wneud ar hyn o bryd mewn ysgolion uwchradd ar draws gwahanol ardaloedd yng Nghymru. Caiff prosiectau lleol - wedi eu rheoli gan mudiadau y trydydd sector neu mewn partneriaeth gydag awdurdodau lleol - ac adnoddau dysgu cyffredinol eu darparu a'u hyrwyddo mewn ysgolion. Cafodd y deunyddiau addysgu Agor Drysau (www.housemate.org.uk), a arianwyd gan Lywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru, eu dosbarthu i Gydlynwyr ABCh ymhob ysgol uwchradd yng Nghymru rhwng Medi 2008 – Hydref 2009. Mae asesiad o sut a ble y caiff y pecyn, y DVD a'r wefan eu defnyddio ar y gweill yn 2010.

Mae Gwasanaeth Addysg Shelter Cymru Shelter Cymru hefyd yn cydlynu ac yn cynnig cymorth i bartneriaid lleol sydd am ddatblygu prosiectau lleol neu wedi eu targedu, sydd yn gysylltiedig â'r deunyddiau Agor Drysau.

Mae Shelter Cymru a'r amryw brosiectau lleol wedi datblgu arbenigedd wrth ddarparu addysg ar adael gartref ac mewn sefyllfa dda iawn i gynnig hyfforddiant i athrawon er mwyn sicrhau cynladwyedd ac i gynnal cysondeb a safon y wybodaeth a drosglwyddir i bobl ifanc.

Barn pobl ifanc

Mae pobl ifanc wedi chwarae rhan allweddol wrth ddatblygu'r ddeiseb hon a teimlant yn gryf iawn y byddai gwybodaeth ac addysg mwy strwythuredig ar adael gartref wedi bod o fudd iddynt. Maent hefyd wedi ystyried sut y gellid darparu addysg ar adael gartref petai'n cael ei gynnwys yn y cwricwlwm

cenedlaethol. Maent wedi rhoi eu barn ar sut a phryd y dylid darparu'r wybodaeth, gan gynnwys yr angen am ddarpariaeth leol a hefyd sicrhau y caiff y lefel gywir o wybodaeth ei drosglwyddo.

Cysylltiadau Strategol

Credwn fod gan gwybodaeth ac addysg ar adael gartref nifer o gysylltiadau strategol, gan gynnwys:

- Confensiwn ar Hawliau'r Plentyn (pwyntiau 13, 17 a 29 yn benodol)
- Cynlluniau Plant a Phobl Ifanc yr Awdurdodau Lleol
- Cynllun 10 mlynedd ar Ddigartrefedd a Chefnogi Pobl

Gwybodaeth bellach

Byddwn yn cyflwyno'r ddeiseb mewn cynhadledd sy'n amlygu pwysigrwydd addysg a gwybodaeth ar adael gartref a sy'n dangos engreiffiau o arfer dda.

Cynhelir cynhadledd 'Gadael gartref: beth ddylai pob person ifanc wybod' yng Nghanolfan yr Urdd, Caerdydd ar Ragfyr 3ydd.

Leaving home education

Addysg ar adael gartref

Petitions Committee / Pwyllgor Deisebau
March 23 Mawrth 2010

Why?

This is what young people want!

Limitations of existing PSE framework

Shelter Cymru's Education Service & Advisory Group

Pam?

Dyma mae bobl ifanc ei eisiau!

Rhwystrau o fewn y fframwaith ABCCh cyfredol

Gwasanaeth Addysg a Grwp Ymgynghori Shelter Cymru

What exactly?

- Recognition
- Statutory requirement
- Where does it fit?

Beth yn union?

- Cydnabyddiaeth
- Yn ofynnol yn statudol
- Ble mae'n eistedd?

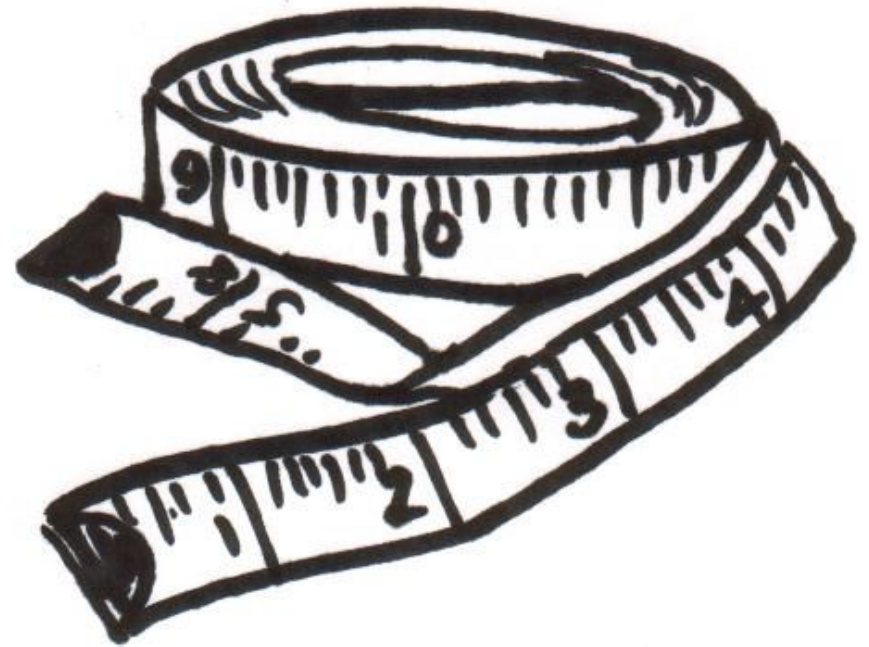


Outcomes

- Measuring effectiveness
- Feedback
- Sustainability

Canlyniadau

- Mesur effeithiolrwydd
- Adborth
- Cynladwyedd

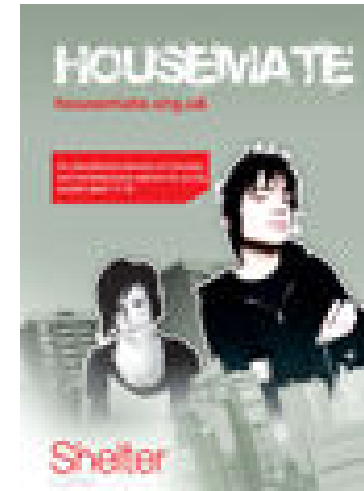


Resource implications

Not many!!

Goblygiadau o ran adnoddau

Dim llawer!!



Thank you for your time / Diolch am eich amser

Jane Hutt AC/AM

**Y Gweinidog dros Blant, Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau
Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills**



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref JH/07525/09

10 DEC 2009

Val Lloyd AM
Chair of the petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

NS AM

9 December 2009

Dea Val,

Thank you for your letter on 2nd December seeking my views on a petition organised by Shelter to include leaving home information in the school curriculum.

I agree that it is important for young people to be given clear information about issues that arise when they leave home. In Wales, personal and social education (PSE) offers opportunities to teach learners about such issues. PSE equips children and young people to be more informed, confident and skilled to interact effectively with others and enables them to take an active and responsible part in society

The themes of PSE include 'active citizenship', 'health and emotional well-being' and 'preparing for lifelong learning'. By developing their self-esteem, schools help learners' become more confident and more able to deal with life generally. Successful management of feelings and emotions has a great impact upon personal effectiveness, and increases learners' ability to cope with conflict, stress, loss and change. This together with a better understanding of their rights and of links between political decisions and their own lives will all contribute to helping young people when they come to leave home.

The *Personal and social education framework for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales* is the key document which schools should use to develop their PSE programmes. The PSE framework provides clear opportunities for schools to equip learners with skills which will enable them to acquire greater self-assurance. More details on PSE are available on: www.wales.gov.uk/personalandsocialeducation which has a link directly to the Shelter Cymru site. If Shelter feel that additional information should be included officials would be happy to discuss further.

In addition to support this important element of the curriculum, the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) materials are currently being adapted by the Welsh Assembly Government for schools in Wales.

Letter from Welsh Local Government Association

Our Ref/Ein Cyf: ST/DS
Your Ref/Eich Cyf:
Date/Dyddiad: 15th January 2010
Please ask for/Gofynnwch am: Daisy Seabourne
Direct line/Llinell uniongyrchol: 029 2046 8600
Email/Ebost: daisy.seabourne@wlga.gov.uk



Val Lloyd AM
Chair Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

Dear Ms Lloyd

Petition: include leaving home education in the National Curriculum – Shelter Cymru

Thank you for seeking the views of the WLGA with regards to this petition. The WLGA supports and recognises the importance of giving young people access to realistic and helpful information about the many issues involved with leaving home. This supports young people in effective decision-making about their lives and contributes to the prevention of homelessness.

As recognised by Shelter's submission, many local authorities and third sector organisations are currently involved in local projects within schools in their own areas. A successful example is the 'Myths & Legends' project delivered by Bridgend County Borough Council and partners, which aims to dispel some of the myths and legends that are associated with housing and homelessness locally. These examples of good practice could inform future work, although it is important to recognise that the needs of each local area will be different and one type of approach may not be suitable in every area of Wales.

An evaluation of Housemate, the Shelter Cymru project, is due in 2010. The case for inclusion in the national curriculum may be further informed by the outcome of this evaluation, when it is available. When considering this proposal it should also be taken into account that the curriculum is crowded and any additions should be supported with a full evaluation of the need to make this a part of the curriculum and what will be the expected outcomes.

If you require any additional information or comment then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Steve Thomas
Chief Executive / Prif Weithredwr

Steve Thomas
Chief Executive
Prif Weithredwr

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Llywydd / President: Bryn Terfel CBE
Is-Llywyddion / Vice Presidents:
Robert Maskrey • Samantha Maskrey •
Huw Edwards • Cerys Matthews • Rebecca Evans

April 12th 2010

Dear Chair,

P-03-265 Include leaving home information and education in the national curriculum

Thank you for your correspondence on March 30th relating to the evidence session on our petition. In response to your request for further information on the proposed Housemate evaluation, I can confirm that this evaluation is now underway and will be completed by the end of 2010. A full written report and executive summary will be available at this time. The evaluation will consider the following:

- How many people/establishments are using the resources (pack, DVD and website)
- Which purpose they are being used for
- Which sections are being used
- Could the resources be more targeted to specific groups
- How well the resources link into the curriculum or frameworks
- Suggestions on improvements for future resource development
- Ideas for linking the resources into other areas of work

This evaluation will be carried out by Shelter Cymru's research team, so it will be an independent in-house evaluation. Shelter Cymru's Education Service will aid with dissemination and collection of questionnaires in order to make best use of time and resources, but the collation of data and evidence will be carried out solely by the research team.

This evaluation is being funded through internal Shelter Cymru sources, as it has been identified as a priority within our 3 year strategic plan. We will send an executive summary to the Welsh Assembly Government as part of our 6 monthly core Education Service report (Section 180 Homelessness Grants Programme). We will also ensure that the Petitions Committee receives a copy of the evaluation report, as requested.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch should you require further information regarding the evaluation.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rhian Jones".

Rhian Jones
Education Coordinator
Shelter Cymru

Letter from Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning

Leighton Andrews AC/AM

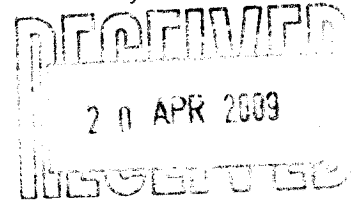
Y Gweinidog dros Blant, Addysg & Dysgu Gydol Oes
Minister for Children, Education & Lifelong Learning



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Your Ref:P-03-265
Our ref: LA/01051/10

Christine Chapman AM
Chair,
Petitions Committee,
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA



13 April 2010

Dear Anne,

Thank you for your letter of 30 March 2010 seeking views on a petition proposing that leaving home education be included in the national curriculum and asking about funding for school counsellors.

With regard to your question about leaving home education it is important that young people are prepared for the challenges, choices and responsibilities of work and adult life. In Wales, Personal and Social Education (PSE) provides the basis for schools to address the issues associated with preparing young people for independent living and it is a statutory requirement that it be provided for all registered pupils in maintained schools aged 7-16. In addition, provision for 7-16 year olds builds on the Personal and Social Development, Well Being and Cultural Diversity area of learning in the Foundation Phase and complements the 14-19 Learning Core.

Guidance to schools and colleges on what is to be taught is set out in the *Personal and social education framework for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales*. The framework recognises the need to equip learners to live safe and healthy lives and develop a sense of personal responsibility. The three themes within PSE, Active Citizenship, Health and Emotional Well-Being and Preparing for Lifelong Learning all provide opportunities to explore and develop the skills and knowledge required for independent living. For example, provision for 14-16 year olds includes development of budgeting skills, how to access financial advice and understanding their rights as a consumer.

The issues set out in the evidence provided to the committee by Shelter Cymru are therefore recognised including the need for young people to be able to manage their finances effectively. For example, we have established the Welsh Financial Education Unit specifically to work with local authorities and schools to capitalise on the opportunities for financial education in both PSE and the Mathematics curriculum. In addition, the Welsh Assembly Government's PSE website provides practitioners with examples of good practice. On this point we welcome examples of good practice in schools and colleges and my officials would be happy to discuss with Shelter Cymru whether there are opportunities for further information and case studies of good practice to be added to the site.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
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English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300
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Correspondence: Leighton.Andrews@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

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You also asked about the funding provided by the Welsh Assembly Government for school counsellors. I can confirm that this funding is ring-fenced and must be used to develop counselling in line with the National Strategy for School-based Counselling Services. The role of the counsellor is to enable the young person to focus on their concerns, providing a vehicle to explore specific problems, make choices, cope with crises, work through feelings of conflict and improve relationships with others. In that sense, counsellors do not provide education on leaving home but would help the young person to develop solutions if leaving home was one of the problems raised with the counsellor. Often, the counsellor will signpost the young person to other sources of information or organisations able to provide additional support. The job description and the role of the counsellor are set out in the School-based Counselling Operating Toolkit which was launched in October 2009.

Yours sincerely
Leighton Andrews

Leighton Andrews AM

Y Gweinidog dros Blant, Addysg & Dysgu Gydol Oes
Minister for Children, Education & Lifelong Learning

Letter from Communities and Culture Committee

**Communities and Culture
Committee**

**Pwyllgor Cymunedau a
Diwylliant**

Christine Chapman AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

28 April 2010

Dear Christine

**P-03-265 Include leaving home information and education in the national
curriculum**

Thank you for your letter dated 30 March regarding a petition raised by Shelter Cymru. As you refer in your letter the Communities and Culture Committee are currently carrying out an inquiry into Financial Inclusion and the Impact of Financial Education. We have just started taking evidence for this inquiry and Shelter Cymru has been invited to give evidence at our meeting on 20 May.

Thank you for bringing this to my attention

Yours sincerely

**Sandy Mewies AM
Committee Chair**



BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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Leighton Andrews AC/AM

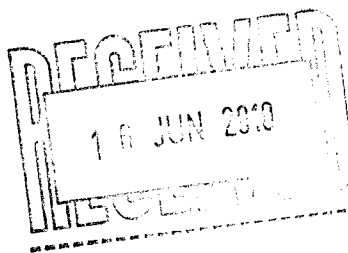
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Minister for Children, Education & Lifelong Learning



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-265
Ein cyf/Our ref LA/01499/10

Christine Chapman AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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CF99 1NA



12 June 2010

Dear Chris,

Thank you for your letter of 25 May seeking an update to the above petition from Shelter Cymru which proposes that information on leaving home education should be included as a specific topic in the *Personal and social education framework for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales*.

As I explained in my letter of 13 April, the Welsh Assembly Government recognises the importance of preparing young people for the challenges, choices and responsibilities of work and adult life. In Wales, personal and social education (PSE), which is a statutory requirement for all registered pupils in maintained schools aged 7 to 16, provides the basis for schools to address the issues associated with preparing young people for independent living.

Guidance on what should be covered is set out in the PSE Framework. The themes within PSE already provide opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge required for independent living. For example, 14 to 16-year-olds should be given opportunities to understand the importance of planning for their financial futures and how to access financial advice.

In addition, the Welsh Financial Education Unit, funded by the Welsh Assembly Government, provides advice and support to local authorities and schools helping them to capitalise on the opportunities for providing financial education in both PSE and mathematics.

The delivery of the curriculum is rightly delegated to schools working in partnership with their local authority. It is for them to decide where the emphasis should be placed in terms of the time given and the strategies for learning to be adopted.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)
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English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400
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Correspondence: Leighton.Andrews@wales.gsi.gov.uk
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However, the Assembly encourages schools to work closely with external organisations, such as Shelter Cymru, to ensure that learners have access to high quality, relevant learning experiences. The PSE guidance website www.wales.gov.uk/personalandsocialeducation signposts organisations that offer support to schools and a link to the Shelter Cymru website is amongst these.

In addition, CLIC www.cliconline.co.uk, funded by the Welsh Assembly Government, is the National Information and Advice Service for young people aged 11 to 25 in Wales. It offers an online channel and a quarterly magazine providing information, news and advice on a range of topics, including housing and money.

The school curriculum in Wales is continually under review. Though at present there are no plans to make changes to the current PSE Framework which was only implemented in September 2008. However, I will ask my official, Mark Lancett PSE Subject Specialist, to liaise with Shelter Cymru.

I look forward to receiving the evaluation report on the Housemate resource which will provide further evidence of learner need regarding leaving home education.

I hope that this information will reassure the Committee that we are committed to working closely with schools to ensure that young people in Wales are provided with a balanced programme of PSE which is relevant and best meets their individual needs.

Yours sincerely


Leighton Andrews AM

Y Gweinidog dros Blant, Addysg & Dysgu Gydol Oes
Minister for Children, Education & Lifelong Learning

Llywydd / President: Bryn Terfel CBE

Is-Llywyddion / Vice Presidents:

Robert Maskrey • Samantha Maskrey •

Huw Edwards • Cerys Matthews • Rebecca Evans

November 2nd 2010

Dear Chair,

P-03-265 Include leaving home information and education in the national curriculum

Thank you for your correspondence dated July 26th relating to the Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning's response to our petition and subsequent evidence session.

In response to your request for an update on the Housemate evaluation, I can report that teachers in 25 secondary schools have responded to the questionnaire to date as well as 17 other organisations working in the youth, education, support or housing sectors. We are also collecting anecdotal evidence from stakeholders who are known users of the Housemate resources.

As part of the evaluation report, we will be including evidence from youth related research projects currently being led by Shelter Cymru. This evidence further supports the need and demand for leaving home education to be included in the curriculum. We will also draw on pupil feedback from our Big Lottery funded North Wales Peer Learning Project, where peer educators have spoken to over 3,000 young people across the region since May 2008.

In terms of the Minister's response, we appreciate his view that the delivery of the curriculum is best delegated to schools working in partnership with their local authority. However, we believe that educating and informing pupils about leaving home and helping them to make a successful transition into independent living cannot be left to chance. It is such a fundamental issue facing all young people and we believe it should be embedded in every school's curriculum.

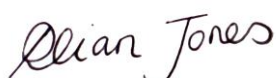
We have worked with the Welsh Financial Education Unit to help teachers make the link between housing issues and financial literacy and we appreciate the Unit's efforts in promoting the Housemate resources.

Shelter Cymru's Education Service is a member of the National Information and Quality Standards Group, administered by CLIC. We will be working with CLIC's editorial group to see how the Housing information section on www.cliconline.co.uk can link into the information on the Housemate website to ensure the highest possible quality and to provide consistent messages.

I have met with Mark Lancett, PSE Subject Specialist and I am currently preparing a case study for the PSE website to highlight areas of good practice in delivering leaving home information. Mark suggested the case study should focus on the different methods of delivery and how Shelter Cymru's Education Service can provide briefings to teachers on delivering Housemate and other relevant resources.

I look forward to sending on the Housemate evaluation report to the Committee in due course and will be happy to discuss the findings.

Yours sincerely,



Rhian Jones, Education Coordinator, Shelter Cymru

November 2nd 2010

Dear Chair,

P-03-265 Include leaving home information and education in the national curriculum

Further to my correspondence on November 2nd 2010, I would like to inform the Committee that the Housemate evaluation and a report including further evidence of the need to include leaving home information and education in the national curriculum is nearing completion.

We anticipate being in a position to submit this report to the Petitions' Committee for consideration at the meeting scheduled for March 1st 2011.

I have sent a case study to Mark Lancett, PSE Subject Specialist, to highlight areas of good practice in delivering leaving home information and hope it will be included on the PSE website.

Your sincerely,



Education Coordinator
Shelter Cymru



Making the case for Leaving Home Education¹

1. Background and Context

Shelter Cymru is Wales' people and homes charity. Our vision is that everyone in Wales should have a decent home. Our pioneering Education Service is now in its tenth year and coordinates the delivery of housing information and education to young people across Wales.

We are funded by the Welsh Assembly Government's Section 180 Good Practice in Homelessness grant to work with local, regional and national partners across a range of services. We actively encourage young people's participation in decisions that affect their future housing options and campaign for greater recognition of leaving home information and education in strategies and action plans. We are responsible for maintaining, developing and promoting the bilingual educational resource Housemate/Agor Drysau.

We consulted on the 2008-2011 Children and Young People's Plans, following which eleven Local Authorities included an action around educating and informing young people about leaving home. We are currently responding to consultations on the 2011-2014 plans and monitoring the progress of existing action plans.

In December 2009, Shelter Cymru collaborated with a group of young people to develop and launch a petition asking the National Assembly for Wales to apply pressure on the Welsh Assembly Government to include leaving home information and education in the national curriculum. In March 2010 our education workers and a young peer educator provided evidence to the Petitions Committee to support this campaign. As part of that evidence session we made a commitment to evaluating the current Housemate resources.

Shelter Cymru's Research Team has undertaken this work and a comprehensive report is available on request.

This report summarises some of the key findings from that evaluation and also brings together findings and recommendations from other sources to strengthen the case for including leaving home education in the national curriculum. The report concludes with suggestions for implementing and monitoring leaving home education within the curriculum.

We stress that including leaving home education on the national curriculum is not the only means of ensuring access to information on leaving home. We continually explore opportunities for targeting information to specific groups of young people. However, we believe that the curriculum still provides the best platform for reaching the majority of young people in Wales.

¹ This is not just about homelessness and the more negative aspects associated with leaving home. It includes financial capabilities, independent living skills in their entirety, where and how to access accommodation as well as managing tenancies and utilities. An awareness of how family mediation works with young people to build bridges with families is also a key component. It also refers to heightened community awareness and good citizenship, as it is useful in helping young people integrate into communities to sustain tenancies. It involves looking at nutrition and healthy meal planning as well as more general topics such as self-esteem and confidence building.

2. Evidence from research projects

Several recent research studies conducted by Shelter Cymru have highlighted the importance of including leaving home education in the school curriculum in Wales.

Research into the housing and related support needs of young vulnerable people in Torfaen² indicated that teaching young people core independent living skills via the Personal and Social Education (PSE) curriculum may better prepare young people for leaving home and prevent them from experiencing housing problems at a later date. As a local worker with young people stated:

“It’s not the teachers getting it wrong, it’s the system. The people who are designing the format, the procedures and the policies for the systems are getting it wrong. In terms of compulsory education, where’s the compulsory education from year dot right through to the time you leave about parenting skills, about finances, budgeting, opening bank accounts?”

Additionally, one local young person who found themselves in housing difficulty told us:

“I’d have liked to have known where to go for help and I would have asked for help.”

As a result of the findings, the Research Team recommended that school-age children and young people (aged 8-16) should be informed about the causes and nature of homelessness and where to seek advice if problems occur. Furthermore, children and young people must be taught independent living skills to prepare them for a transition to independent living. Whilst this type of provision already exists to some extent, it was recommended that the use of a ‘Peer Educator model’ (where other young people share their experiences with the pupils) would increase engagement and boost the effectiveness of the teaching.

Recent Shelter Cymru and Consumer Focus Wales research³ into financial exclusion amongst care leavers also strengthened the argument for independent living skills to be taught through the school curriculum. Many of the young care leavers we spoke to say they would like to see independent living skills taught in schools. One young person in Local Authority care stated:

“In school we are not taught anything so everything I know I have had to ask.”

Another young care leaver talked of the importance of learning about budgeting money before the move into independent accommodation:

“You learn stuff in school that doesn’t even matter, when they could teach you about money and how to budget.”

Local service providers agreed:

*“I believe it should be part of the school curriculum, in social studies or something like that.”
(Local worker with young care leavers)*

Again we found evidence for the potential of the Peer Educator Model in increasing the engagement of the young people:

“We should be taught about it by another young person. Someone we can relate to.” (Young care leaver)

² Campbell et al. (2011). The housing and related support needs of vulnerable young people in Torfaen

³ Campbell et al. (2011) Research into financial exclusion amongst care leavers in Wales

The justification for life skills to be a compulsory part of the national curriculum is that there will be a generation of young people who grow up better prepared for independent living, even if these skills are not imparted at home. There is also the possibility that this will have a knock-on effect on future generations who could, in turn, learn these skills from their parents. The focus would be on the prevention of housing problems and homelessness rather than waiting to assist people once they have reached a crisis point with their housing.

In 2009, Shelter Cymru's Research Team produced ['In the Know but not in education?'](#)⁴ based on research into housing advice interventions for young people at risk of exclusion from mainstream education. The report made the following recommendation:

"It is clear that information and advice on housing is given limited priority in schools. The Welsh Assembly Government (Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills) should promote the inclusion of housing information and advice in schools, using the findings of this research to determine what information should be delivered at what point in a school career".

The Education Service has recently worked with young researchers on a Joseph Rowntree Foundation Charter for Change on Housing. This involved young people across Wales carrying out research with their peers to see what can be done to help young people with the transition into living independently. The research forms part of the basis for the [Welsh Charter for Change](#)⁵ (and [summary](#)) and has contributed to a wider [UK Charter](#)⁶.

When asked what could be changed about finding and keeping housing and what could be done to help young people, more than 50 per cent of responses included the need for more housing information, education and advisers in schools or colleges (based on responses to 120 questionnaires).

Three quarters of young people who have seen a presentation by the Shelter Cymru North East Wales Peer Educators said their knowledge of housing had improved and 58 per cent said they would now definitely know what to do if faced with housing issues (based on 1800 feedback forms)⁷.

⁴ Mackie (2009) In the know but not in education? Early housing advice interventions with young people excluded from mainstream education

⁵ Core Group Cymru (2010) Welsh Charter for Change on Housing

⁶ Kelly (2010) A young people's charter on housing

⁷ Data gathered from feedback forms on Shelter Cymru's Big Lottery funded Peer Learning Project in North East Wales

3. Current provision and delivery of leaving home education in schools

The Housemate pack and DVD for Key Stages 3,4 and post-16 was launched in July 2008. This bilingual educational resource on leaving home is a redevelopment of the original 2002 Housemate pack.

The pack and DVD are complemented by a website at www.housemate.org.uk, which offers direct information to young people and an Education section for youth work practitioners, including teachers.

Our Education team has distributed 550 hard copy packs and DVDs and it is estimated that around 93 per cent of state secondary schools have received Housemate. Packs have been distributed to further education college lecturers, youth service/YPP representatives and Local Authority departments. Housemate has also been distributed to several Welsh organisations working with young people.

Between September 2010 and January 2011 the Shelter Cymru Research Team evaluated the Housemate resources. They found that the Housemate pack is a flexible resource that can be tailored to meet the needs of the user and the group they are working with. Housemate is primarily used in PSE lessons and during activity days in schools. The pack is used as a standalone resource to educate pupils on independent living, housing and homelessness issues.

The perception of the Housemate resources was particularly favourable with schools. Many respondents felt the Housemate resource pack was very accessible, clear, and informative with good visuals/illustrations:

“Very interesting and great examples, which were very relevant to the pupils.” (Secondary school)

“Excellent resource- every part of it.” (Secondary school)

Overall Housemate was rated an average of eight out of ten for usefulness (where zero is ‘not at all useful’ and ten is ‘extremely useful’) and the majority of respondents would recommend it to others to use:

“I will definitely continue to use Housemate. It’s an excellent resource that every school should make the most of.” (Secondary school)

During the evaluation, 65 per cent of schools told us they believe that leaving home education should be compulsory in schools in Wales (23 per cent did not answer the question and only 12 per cent said no).

“It’s an uphill struggle. Need to get information like this onto the curriculum to educate young people, rather than being an afterthought.” (Project worker)

As part of its remit, Shelter Cymru’s Education Service carries out an annual mapping exercise to assess the different approaches to teaching and informing young people about leaving home across the 22 Local Authority areas. Several approaches are in place on a local and regional level, as well as a dedicated housing section on the all-Wales CLIC online information pages. Regional and local projects are being delivered by Local Authority departments, third sector organisations or collaboratively across sectors. Approaches include Peer Learning models, targeted resources and direct delivery in schools. Some agencies are using and adapting Housemate and some are producing their own lesson plans and resources.

4. Recommendations for including leaving home education in the curriculum
The findings from several research projects suggest there is a demand for learning about leaving home and living independently at school and there are several examples of current approaches. The results of the Housemate evaluation indicate that the resources are being generally well received by schools. However, a low response rate makes it difficult to accurately assess current usage levels across Wales.

To ensure young people gain access to high quality and consistent housing information through the national curriculum, Shelter Cymru recommends that:

- Basic housing information is included for prospective teachers on PGCE and FE teaching courses. This could be delivered by existing services and would involve a briefing on key housing concepts and making the most of existing educational resources. We believe an understanding of the importance of a safe and decent home should be central to the ethos of any school. We also believe that for leaving home education to be a sustainable option, it has to come from within schools. Whilst direct delivery by external specialist agencies may be perceived as more effective, many such services or projects are short-term and will undoubtedly be affected by budgetary restraints
- Funding is made available by the WAG to continually evaluate, develop and promote high-quality housing resources for schools
- Schools, through Local Authority Education Services are made aware of, and engage with local, regional or national 'consultants' who can advise them on the delivery of leaving home education. Consultants could include, for example Shelter Cymru's Education Coordinator, youth housing providers, local support agencies, and Local Authority departments
- Local Authority Education Services should encourage schools to establish relationships with local supported housing providers (eg hostels) to develop peer learning/mentoring initiatives. Funding should be made available for regional Peer Learning Development Workers to facilitate such initiatives

Shelter Cymru fully supports continued efforts by agencies across Wales to access funding for leaving home education through grants from the Big Lottery, Children in Need, Local Authorities etc. We would continue to support such bids if the proposal to include leaving home education in the curriculum were successful. However, any such projects should add value to schools' provision of leaving home education rather than being the sole providers.

Shelter Cymru contributed to the National Assembly's Culture and Communities Committee inquiry into financial inclusion and the impact of financial education and welcome the recommendations within that report. In particular we welcome the Welsh Assembly Government's Guidance for schools and colleges on financial education for 7-19 year olds in Wales⁸ and are pleased to see that Housemate has been recommended. We are eager to develop further links between financial literacy and leaving home education. We would stress however, that leaving home education should not be perceived as a component of financial education alone.

To this end, we would recommend that similar guidance is developed for the provision of leaving home education in schools and would welcome any opportunities to contribute.

⁸ Welsh Assembly Government (2010) Financial education for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales. Guidance for schools and colleges

5. Measuring Outcomes

Whilst it is difficult to measure the long-term effectiveness of early interventions such as leaving home education, we would recommend the following approaches:

- To apply the recommendation from the Culture and Communities Committee inquiry report to leaving home education⁹:

“We know that teachers have to teach lots of different things in PSE. However we believe that it’s very important that children can learn how to manage money well, so we’ve asked the Welsh Government to keep an eye on how much time teachers spend on financial education, as part of the PSE curriculum. We’ve also suggested that the Welsh Government could ask school inspectors to keep an eye on what is being taught in financial education lessons”

- To apply the monitoring systems recommended in the Welsh Assembly Government’s Guidance for schools and colleges on Financial education for 7-19 year olds in Wales to leaving home education
- To make it a duty for Local Authorities and other public funded services to include a question around leaving home education in housing or homelessness application forms. Even if this suggests the intervention has not been effective, it may show that at least the individual knew where to access appropriate support.

6. Contact details

For further information on the campaign to include leaving home education in the national curriculum or to find out more about Shelter Cymru’s Education Service, please contact:

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www.sheltercymru.org.uk
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⁹ National Assembly for Wales Communities and Culture Committee (2010) Financial Inclusion and the Impact of Financial Education

Leighton Andrews AC/AM
Y Gweinidog dros Blant, Addysg & Dysgu Gydol Oes
Minister for Children, Education & Lifelong Learning



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-265
Ein cyf/Our ref LA/00627/11

Christine Chapman AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

committee.business@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

15 March 2011

Dear Anna,

Thank you for your letter of 3 March 2011 seeking my views on the implementation of recommendations contained in the Shelter Cymru submission 'Making the case for Leaving Home Education'.

I fully recognise the importance of preparing young people for the challenges, choices and responsibilities of work and adult life. In Wales, personal and social education (PSE), which is a statutory requirement for all registered pupils in maintained schools, provides the basis for schools to address the issues associated with preparing young people for independent living. The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification, which is being delivered to some 35,000 learners in over 160 schools and FE colleges across Wales, provides specific opportunities for learners aged 14 to 19 to learn about social issues in contemporary society, specifically housing-related issues.

The delivery of the curriculum is delegated to schools working in partnership with their local authority. It is for them to decide where the emphasis should be placed in terms of priorities, time given to this area of learning and the strategies for learning to be adopted. The Welsh Assembly Government encourages schools to work closely with external organisations such as Shelter Cymru to ensure that learners have access to high quality, relevant learning experiences. To support schools, the PSE guidance website provides a link to the Shelter Cymru 'Housemate' website. I am pleased that you have found the *Financial education for 7 to 19-year olds in Wales* guidance document useful.

Whilst I acknowledge Shelter Cymru's commitment to leaving home education, I am unable to support the submission's recommendations. At present, there are no plans to review the school curriculum for Wales but I will ask my officials to take note of the 'Housemate' evaluation findings and research evidence when potential future changes to the PSE framework for 7 to 19-year-olds are being considered.

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Given that I am not proposing to change the PSE framework at present, now is not the right time to make commitments to developing guidance for the provision of leaving home education or to fund the evaluation, development and promotion of housing resources for schools. Local authorities are best placed to decide how to allocate funding for specific initiatives, such as Peer Learning Development Workers, based upon local priorities.

Prospective teachers must achieve qualified teacher status. The precise content of the courses they undertake is determined by individual Initial Teacher Training institutions. Nationally, Estyn monitors the quality of education provided by schools. Inspections cover all aspects of school provision including the quality of provision to promote learner well-being and the development of social and life skills. Evidence from such inspections is used to evaluate how schools meet the statutory requirement to deliver broad, balanced PSE.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the submission. We are committed to working closely with schools to ensure that young people in Wales are provided with a relevant, balanced programme of PSE which best meets their individual needs.

Yours sincerely



Leighton Andrews AM

Minister for Children, Education & Lifelong Learning