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Children in Wales
Plant yng Nghymru

29th September 2015

William Powell AM
Committee Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Dear William,

Re: letter of 5th August 2015.

Petition P-04-511 Support for Children and Young People Participation Standards.

Thank you for your letter of 5 August 2015 regarding support for children and young people's participation standards.

Children in Wales is the national umbrella body for organisations and individuals who work with children, young people and their families in Wales. The organisation was also one of the founder members of the Participation Unit, based at Save the Children, which developed the National Children and Young People's (CYP's) Participation Standards for Wales. In addition Children in Wales developed, with young disabled people from the All Wales 'Together for Rights', forum, an accessible version of the CYP Participation Standards poster.

The CYP's Participation Standards, the young inspectors' teams and the Kite Mark were developed as a range of tools to support practice and policy in relation to the participation of children and young people in Wales.

When the Participation Unit work ended in 2013, there was an acknowledgement that the work of the Young Inspectors would remain active in those Local Authorities where there were established teams,

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with reciprocal arrangements in place between Local Authorities. It is our understanding that this arrangement continues in the Local Authorities where the Young Inspectors remain active.

Since October 2014, Children in Wales has developed Cymru Ifanc - Young Wales to enable Children and Young People to have their voices heard by Ministers and policy makers. As outlined in previous correspondence to the Committee, although not in the original bid, Children in Wales was pleased to become the national hub for the Standards and a range of activities were undertaken including making resources available for practitioners through the newly developed 'Young Wales' website www.youngwales.wales www.cymruifanc.cymru.

In relation to refreshing the standards, it became apparent from meetings with Youth Forum workers that the variation across local authorities was either due to improving the model to become more effective, or alternatively to deal with the reduction in staffing to be able to deliver the previous model. The task therefore became more complex in order to ensure that any refreshed model was in fact deliverable across the whole of Wales.

As part of the work of Young Wales, in early 2015 the Welsh Government, asked Young Wales to *involve children and young people in refreshing of the participation standards and sharing the experience of young inspectors in development of the kite-marking process.*

In undertaking this work we have had discussions with youth forums across Wales to establish which areas were supporting Young Inspectors teams and undertaking inspections, and also explored what models of work other Local Authorities have adopted and developed. It is clear that some local authorities are actively supporting and developing the Young Inspectors to inspect services within the local authority and will continue to do so. A small number of authorities have embedded the standards into their commissioning contracts, and are inspecting a range of services against the standards. The Local Authorities that are delivering the Young Inspectors and Kitemarking scheme, have established reciprocal arrangements for verifying the inspection, which, if successful, results in the award of the Kite mark. From our discussion with participation workers and those who are currently working with Young Inspectors teams, the reciprocal arrangements, are working well.

Where Local Authorities are no longer using the standards, Children in Wales is aware that there are a variety of models, all influenced by the CYP Participation Standards, but developed to suit local needs and capacity. For example, Merthyr Tydfil has developed a Participation Promise, which organisations sign up to and this is followed up by monitoring visits. The Vale of Glamorgan and Swansea have developed a framework for promoting rights.

Cymru Ifanc/Young Wales is launching two Wales Wide surveys, one aimed at children and young people and the other aimed at workers to inform our future work in relation to the Children and Young People Participation Standards.


Children in Wales has also engaged the person who previously led the original development of the CYP Participation Standards to take this work forward particularly with young people who have experience as

inspectors. Ensuring young people are involved invariably requires dates within school holidays and these are frequently the times when local Youth Forums arrange their own meetings. Locations are generally arranged in accordance with the convenience of those who are able to attend. As an All Wales organisation with offices in Caernarfon as well as Cardiff, Children in Wales arranges meetings in all parts of Wales in a variety of venues.

The geographical issues have also been addressed in part by the visits that have been arranged by this worker to meet young people in their own Youth Forum meetings. This also ensures that more children and young people are involved.

Children in Wales remains committed to ensuring that the CYP Participation Standards are effective in improving children and young people's participation and is working hard to ensure that an effective model is the result that suits all parts of Wales and is deliverable.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catriona Williams". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Catriona Williams OBE
Chief Executive