

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref WAQ75432

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Assembly Member for Aberconwy

Janet.FinchSaunders@assembly.wales

5 January 2018

Dear Janet,

I refer to your recent Written Assembly Question (WAQ75432) which asked what plans I have to introduce BSL as part of the curriculum. In the reply it was noted that you would receive a response via correspondence.

I recognise the importance of sign language to the deaf community and that has been acknowledged by the Welsh Government, with British Sign Language (BSL) having been recognised as a language in its own right, since January 2004.

Within the current school curriculum, schools can teach sign language to learners through Personal and Social Education lessons. We encourage schools to work with specialist organisations that could enhance the provision they provide.

In developing the new curriculum, each of the six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) are being designed and developed by groups of Pioneer Schools in partnership with Welsh Government, Regional Consortia, Estyn, Higher Education, business and other key partners. These groups include representation from special schools.

Work on the more detailed design of the AoLEs began in September. Successful Futures makes a clear recommendation that the structure of the new curriculum should be inclusive and that “all children and young people should make progress along the same continuum, regardless of any additional learning needs they may have”. As such, the Pioneers will need to ensure that the new curriculum is accessible to all learners, including deaf and hearing-impaired learners, and consider BSL as a medium of education in respect of this. The Pioneer Special Schools in each AoLE group are of course integral to this.

The group developing the Languages, Literacy and Communication AoLE has recommended that all pupils have an entitlement to learn Welsh, English and another language from primary school, including literature for all. Schools would decide which other language children learn. The group is working with the National Deaf Children’s Society to

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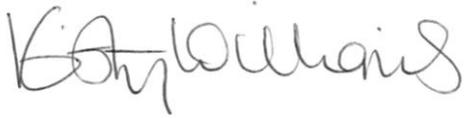
Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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.

secure suitable expert BSL input into the development of the progression framework for languages.

I hope this clarifies the position.

Yours sincerely

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

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