**Services for care experienced children: exploring radical reform**

Written consultation

**Background**

**What is the consultation about?**

**We want to hear your radical, top line priorities for policy areas where change is needed and which would make the biggest difference to the lives of children and young people.**

**We want to hear your top priorities for radical reform in the following three stages of the care system:**

1. **Before care: Safely reducing the number of children in the care system**
2. **In care: Quality services and support for children in care**
3. **After care: On-going support when young people leave care**

The closing date for submissions is **17 February 2023**.

Although we welcome any and all responses, this consultation is aimed at adults and organisations. We will be hearing from children and young people by engaging with them directly.

**Background**

There has been a 35% increase in looked after children between 2011 and 2021:

* In 2011 there were 5,410 children in care in Wales.
* By 2021 there were 7,265 children in the care of Welsh local authorities.

In 2011, for every 10,000 new-born babies in Wales, 43 became the subject of care proceedings within two weeks of birth. By 2018 this had more than doubled to 83 babies per 10,000 births.

Looked after children are high on the political agenda following the First Minister’s personal commitment to reduce the number of children in care. The Welsh Government’s Programme for Government includes a series of relevant and far reaching commitments, including to “Explore radical reform of current services for children looked after and care leavers.”

The Committee’s summer 2021 consultation on its priorities for the Sixth Senedd also identified several issues relevant to care experienced children:

* Support and placements for children in care
* Accommodation and support for care leavers
* Children’s advocacy services
* The children’s social care workforce

**Inquiry timeline**

**The Committee will hold a series of face to face meetings across Wales with care experienced children and birth parents who have had a child removed during late 2022. In early 2023 the Committee will take oral evidence, and will publish a short report in Spring 2023 containing top line policy areas for reform.**

**Providing Written Evidence**

The Senedd has two official languages, Welsh and English.

In line with the Senedd’s Official Languages Scheme (<https://senedd.wales/commission/senedd-commission-policy/official-languages/>) the Committee requests that documents or written responses to consultations intended for publication or use in Senedd proceedings are submitted bilingually. When documents or written responses are not submitted bilingually, we will publish in the language submitted, stating that it has been received in that language only.

We expect other organisations to implement their own standards or schemes and to comply with their statutory obligation.

Please see guidance for those providing evidence for committees. (<https://senedd.wales/senedd-business/committees/getting-involved-with-committees/>)

**Disclosure of information**

Please ensure that you have considered the Senedd’s policy on disclosure of information (<https://senedd.wales/help/privacy/senedd-committee-privacy-notice/>) before submitting information to the Committee.

This template is available for you to draft your responses only. All responses should be submitted via the [online consultation form](https://senedd.wales/committees/children-young-people-and-education-committee/consultation-services-for-care-experienced-children-exploring-radical-reform/).

**Your opinion**

The Committee would like to hear your thoughts on the top priorities for radical reform in the following three areas of the care system:

1. Before care: Safely reducing the number of children in the care system
2. In care: Quality services and support for children in care
3. After care: On-going support when young people leave care

Some things to be aware of before you start answering the consultation questions:

* You do not need to submit your views on **all three** stages of the care system.
* You can submit a **maximum of** **three** top priorities for each stage of the care system, but you can submit fewer than three if you want.
* If you provide any information that you feel is not suitable for public disclosure, please indicate which parts should not be published and give your reasons for this.

### **1. Before care: Safely reducing the number of children in the care system**

### Please outline a **maximum of three** top priorities for radical reform of services for safely reducing the number of children in the care system:

### Priority 1:

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### Priority 2:

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### Priority 3:

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### **2. In care: Quality services and support for children in care**

### Please outline a **maximum of three** top priorities for radical reform of services for children in care:

### Priority 1:

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### Priority 2:

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### Priority 3:

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### **3. After care: On-going support when young people leave care**

### Please outline a **maximum of three** top priorities for radical reform of the on-going support provided when young people leave care:

### Priority 1:

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### Priority 2:

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### Priority 3:

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### **4. Anything else**

### Do you have anything else you would like to tell us?

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