

Rita Jones, Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin (the Welsh Language Nursery Movement)

**1. Do you agree with our view that a dedicated service for Children will enhance the public service offering in the Welsh language for Children?**

We agree. The wide range of English language channels for children and young people attracts young Welsh people away from S4C and this has a negative effect on the habit of watching Welsh language programmes. We strongly believe that the same level of provision is needed in Welsh. We agree that the different services for the different age groups should be marketed separately, and that styles appropriate to the individual age groups should be employed in the marketing. We strongly disagree with the statement that Nursery aged services do not need to be marketed. We think it imperative that an innovative marketing campaign should target the parents of younger children, with especially innovative techniques used to reach non Welsh speaking parents who do not watch S4C and are therefore not aware of the Welsh language provision available to their children.

**2. Do you have any comments / what are your views about the proposed hours of broadcast and our target audiences?**

We agree on the whole. However consideration should be given to the need and potential of repeating nursery programmes (through red button options) between 16.00 and 18.00. Increasingly, younger children spend large parts of the day at nursery as both parents work. Repeating nursery programmes during late afternoon would afford working parents the opportunity to watch and enjoy Welsh language programmes with their children, and avoid having to use English language channels at supper time and before bed time.

**3. What would you consider to be the most important key characteristics for television services for Children provided by S4C?**

Welsh language programmes of the highest standard and quality for children should be aimed for.

The service for the youngest children should introduce language patterns appropriate to that age, and develop elements that are relevant to them. Social and educational use of the language could be encouraged by using characters that appeal to young children e.g. Mabon a Mabli. Characters like these can encourage the use of Welsh in everyday play. There is an excellent example of just such a character on Basque television. Similarly, for the older age group, additional games, arising from the TV provision, should be produced. Discussion between S4C and MYM would ensure that programmes are produced in line with the activities of the nursery curriculum e.g. Cymraeg i'r Teulu (Welsh for the Family), Abersaff and Darganfod ein Byd (Discovering our World).

As we prepare to introduce the Foundation Stage, the new curriculum in Wales for 3 - 7 year olds, consideration should be given to using elements of this curriculum as a basis for children's programmes in the future.

**4. Do you have any comments on the options set out at paragraph 4 and in particular the option 1 and 2? Do you have any other comments you would like us to consider on this issue?**

We strongly believe that a children's channel should provide a service 7 days per week in order to attract and hold on to young viewers. We therefore believe that option 2 is the only

viable option to provide a service that would be ideal for children. Again, we would suggest use of the red button for Assembly broadcasts. Neither should the service be disrupted by additional programming from national events on the same channel. We again suggest the red button as an option for these broadcasts.

**5. Do you believe that a third party provider would be willing to provide a Welsh language television service for Children of a similar nature to that outlined above on a commercial basis?**

Because of the specialist nature of the question, we do not offer a comment on the above.

**6. Can you identify any other stakeholders we should be contacting not included at Annex A?**

We believe that the following agencies should have been included in the consultation:

Disability Rights Commission

Cymdeithas y Dysgwyr (The Welsh Learners' Society)

Children and Young People's Partnerships

Y Ddraig Ffyni (The Funky Dragon)

Cymuned (Community)

Sunday Schools

Children's Councils (from a cross-section of schools)

**7. Do you have any other comments you would like us to consider in relation to this Consultation on a new Welsh language television channel for Children?**

Although we understand the statutory and corporate reasons for the style and language of the document, we feel that this has not been an effective way of encouraging feedback and comments from parents and children. Parents and young people could have been consulted within Ti a Fi nurseries, youth clubs, Young Farmers' clubs and Parents and Teachers Associations. In future, it should also be ensured that children and young people who have special needs take a full part in the process of providing feedback on the service.