

## **The Welsh Labour Government has done much for Education in Wales**

I welcome the adoption by the Senedd of the report on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Communities' contribution to Welsh life and culture. It is good to see that the issues around Black Lives Matter are being taken seriously by our elected representatives. It is important that we in multicultural Wales tackle racism and what better way than to educate the young into developing an understanding and respect for others, regardless of colour or creed.

During the Covid crisis we can be proud that the Welsh Labour Government ensured the provision of free school meals during lock down and holiday time, for children in poverty. Compared to the Westminster Tory Government that had to be shamed by a footballer into making similar provision for such children.

I welcome the Senedd provision of a workable alternative to the much appreciated Erasmus scheme for students to study abroad – particularly at a time when there is a decline in modern foreign language teaching and learning.

“The Assembly: Approves Sex Education For Children” is the title of an election leaflet from a reactionary political group. Their argument is that the only way parents can safeguard their children from compulsory sex education is to vote to abolish the Senedd. I do not believe that ignorance is bliss. How many parents are too embarrassed to talk to their children about sexual matters? How many parents are relieved to learn that teachers are trained to talk to their children, in appropriate age related language about Relationships, Sex and Health Education, (RSE) ? As a retired teacher I am pleased that the Senedd recently passed a Bill that will see all pupils from the age of 3-16 taught inclusive, fact-based RSE. Hopefully it will help to address the societal problem of misogyny and violence against girls and women.

The passing of this Bill is not the only act of the Welsh Labour Government I wish to congratulate them on. Wales has made improvements in ranking for all A level grades and is now ranked first for A\* compared to the English regions and Northern Ireland. Education in Wales is far, far better than that in England – witness the Foundation phase, the New Curriculum and Assessment arrangements, the rejection of Academies and Free Schools, the maintenance of Comprehensive Schools of local democracy and the Welsh Baccaulaureate.

Chris Newman (SEA Cymru)