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Tel./Ffon: 01633 644020
Date/Dyddiad: 21 April 2026

Letter sent on e-mail only [REDACTED]

Ruth Jones, MP
Chair of the Welsh Affairs Committee
House of Commons
Palace of Westminster
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Chair,

I am writing on behalf of Monmouthshire County Council in response to the Welsh Affairs Committee's request for views on cross-border education for children aged 5–18. Please accept my apologies that this response is submitted later than requested.

Monmouthshire is a border authority, and we regularly support children and families who move between, or access provision across, the English and Welsh education systems. While we strongly support the principles and ambitions of the education system in Wales, operating across two distinct national frameworks presents a number of practical challenges.

From a curriculum and assessment perspective, there are significant differences between the English National Curriculum and the Curriculum for Wales. These differences can be complex for learners transitioning between systems, particularly in secondary education and during examination years. Variations in external qualifications, grading systems, and specifications can be confusing for parents, learners, and employers, and transitions at key stages can result in poorer-than-expected outcomes for some pupils. The teaching and acquisition of Welsh is a particular challenge for learners entering the Welsh system later in their education, placing pressure on immersion provision in border authorities.

Differences in wider policy frameworks can also create confusion for families and schools. Variations in attendance policy, deferred entry to school, and childcare and early years entitlements across the border are not always well understood by parents and require additional support from schools and local authorities.

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From an inclusion and additional learning needs perspective, differences between the English SEND and Welsh ALN legislative frameworks are a significant issue. These include challenges around statutory planning processes, funding responsibilities, and consultation on Education, Health and Care Plans when children live in one country and are educated in the other. Securing health input for learners educated in Wales but resident in England, such as speech and language therapy and occupational therapy, can be particularly difficult due to commissioning and service boundary issues. There are also complexities for children looked after, for pupils requiring EOTAS provision, and during transitions where education, social care, and health systems do not align.

Finally, we have concerns about an increasing number of pupils being directed towards schools in Monmouthshire from across the border, sometimes linked to behavioural concerns, which raises risks around informal exclusion practices and places additional pressure on local provision.

In summary, cross-border education requires families, schools, and local authorities to navigate two distinct systems. This creates administrative complexity, risks inequity for learners, and can negatively affect educational continuity. Greater clarity on responsibilities, improved cross-border collaboration—particularly in ALN and health services—and more consistent transitional guidance would significantly improve outcomes for children and young people.

We would be very happy to provide further detail, or oral evidence should this be helpful to the Committee.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M A Brocklesby', with a long, sweeping horizontal line underneath.

**County Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby
Leader of Monmouthshire County Council**