

66 Brynhyfryd
Glynneath
Neath
SA11 5BA

Jeremy Miles - AM for Neath,
7 High Street,
Pontardawe,
Swansea
SA8 4HU

30/7/2019

Dear Mr Miles,

Please note that this letter is split into two sections:

Section 1. Reply to the content of your letter dated 22 July 2019

Section 2. My analysis of the intent of your letter dated 22 July 2019

Section 1. Reply to the content of your letter dated 22 July 2019

Thank you for your letter dated 22 July referencing my visit to your surgery on 5 July 2019 and my subsequent email dated 7 July 2019 supplying additional information and requesting that you confirm the content of our meeting.

I disagree with your letter on the following points:

Paragraph 1 - point 1. You say that I attended your surgery to discuss my research in relation to Play Wales. My recollection is that I provided you with information so that the Welsh Assembly Government could understand why it's policies are life endangering to the children of Wales. Whilst 'Play Wales' plays a major part in the role of placing children in life endangering situations, it is your government that is funding this organisation and are accepting the advice of Play Wales in relation to these policies without conducting due diligence and investigating it's content. I specifically provided you with evidence of the life endangering form of play called 'deep play' which is part of the playwork curriculum. This was the main point of my visit and you do not refer to it in your letter.

Paragraph 2. Is delightfully written and worded, however it says everything I didn't do or say, not what I did and said. I provided you information about children 'playing with fire', 'deep play' and how your play policies came into force after these were included in the play curriculum.

Paragraph 2 - point 1 - I didn't take you up on your offer because your life endangering policies are your problem, not mine. I told you I was there at your surgery to provide you with this information and that your government

had a serious problem. I provided you with a timeline of how this problem occurred.

1997 - in response to an invitation from Win Griffiths, Minister for Children in Wales, Play Wales was re-established as a national charity.

2001 Play Wales (a WAG funded charity) publish "The First Claim" written by Bob Hughes which includes on the Welsh national play curriculum, playing with fire as the number one activity and also 'deep play', placing children in life threatening situations as essential to the personal development of children. (You had previously agreed with me that both of these 'play' opportunities for children were dangerous.). I provided you with photocopies of excerpts from this publication as evidence allowing you to identify the source of this material. I also provided you with evidence that some of the scientific literature referred to in "The First Claim" had been misrepresented.

2002 The Welsh Assembly Government introduced their first play policy which stated that "children have an innate desire to seek out opportunities to take increasing risks" and that "the Welsh Assembly Government is committed to ensuring that all children have access to rich stimulating environments free from inappropriate risk."

I informed you that if 'playing with fire' and 'deep play' must be considered as appropriate risks because they were already on the national play curriculum, and therefore if a child died while in 'deep play' then it is your government's fault because your government has accepted that 'deep play' is essential for a child's personal development. To use a common analogy. The Welsh Assembly Government didn't read the small print.

2019 - Your policies in relation to children's play still include placing children at risk. WAG funded educational material provided by Adult Learning Wales references "The First Claim" as an additional learning 'tool' and you can still buy this publication from Play Wales, a WAG funded charity. Fire is still number one on the curriculum, and deep play is still essential for child development.....

IT IS THEREFORE YOUR GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TO PLACE CHILDREN IN LIFE THREATENING SITUATIONS

For example: **a playworker can take a group of children onto a main road to dodge traffic and if one, or two, or even three die they can point to your play policy and funded literature and say, "it says right here I should to do this, it says so on pages 10, 31 & 35, in fact it says it is essential, I'm just doing my job."**

Paragraph 2 - point 2 'and also that you had not made allegations

against any individual Welsh Government ministers' is a lovely way of deflecting the content of my email dated 7 July 2019 in which I stated "that there are members of your government who lack integrity and care only for themselves and not about Welsh children. It is unfortunate that this AM is the Minister for Children." By this I mean that the assembly member Huw Irranca-Davies (Minister for Children etc) has failed in his duty of care to the children of Wales. You can consider this an allegation, accusation, a claim or an assertion against the Minister for Children. I provided him with information in July 2018 that the organisation Play Wales are placing children in danger. I provided him photographic evidence from a video and numerous quotes from Play Wales copyrighted educational material that was both dangerous and derogatory to Welsh children. This is an extract form an email I sent to him on 24 July 2018.

"A leading professional in the play industry stated that incidents relating to fire had increased amongst his play facilities after the introduction of the course training film. The film features children chasing each other with burning materials. Play Wales believe this is natural child's play. I am in process of making a full analysis of the course but this will take a couple of months. Meanwhile Play Wales are teaching bad practice and dangerous methods of play to care workers. This will impact not only on the children of the country but on the country as a whole. I urge you to immediately suspend the activities of Play Wales and place the organisation under review."

He replied to this email on 27 July 2018 with a list of other government organisations responsible for the L2APP course. On the 29th July 2018 I asked the minister:

"Does the Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care (Huw Irranca-Davies) think it appropriate that children are encouraged to play with fire unsupervised?"

The Minister for Children ignored this question in his reply of 20 August 2018 so I provided him with my opinion of his situation:

"As you are the Minister for Children in the Welsh Government, the buck stops with you. Both you and the Welsh Government are responsible for a system that is teaching dangerous practices that place children at risk. It is your responsibility to protect children from this system by investigating my concerns and changing your system of education to one that teaches a safe environment in which the children of Wales can play. On two occasions you have attempted to pass the buck down the system, this concerns me, you have a duty of care to the children of Wales and you have failed in this duty so far.

So that I can gain a greater understanding of you role as Minister for Children, please can you answer the following questions:

"Does the Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care (Huw

Irranca-Davies) believe that he has a duty of care to the children of Wales?"

"Does the Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care (Huw Irranca-Davies) think it appropriate that playworkers are taught that children are encouraged to play with fire unsupervised?"

"Does the Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care (Huw Irranca-Davies) think it appropriate that a Welsh government funded organisation are teaching playworkers that children should be encouraged to play with hammers?"

"Does the Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care (Huw Irranca-Davies) think it appropriate that a government funded organisation 'Play Wales' have misused public funds and instructed solicitors to refuse a Freedom of Information request?"

The Minister for Children failed to reply to the four questions above by email on 24 September 2018 and only offered the following information.

"Thank you for your email of 20 August and previous correspondence regarding play and playwork qualifications in Wales." Play Wales is a registered charity which is funded by the Welsh Government. However, the charity also has other sources of income. I have nothing further to add as I have covered the matters you have raised in my responses dated 27 July and 20 August.

I believe this reply proves that the Minister for children lacks integrity. he has refused to answer pertinent questions therefore he is a dishonest politician and in my opinion is not fit for office. I asked the Minister for Children three times if he believed that children should play with fire unsupervised and in the last email there were four questions, he didn't answer one properly. Instead he attempted to deceive me with an incomplete answer that Play Wales were only partially funded by the Welsh Government. This is true but in the financial year 2016/17 when Play Wales were funded to develop the L2APP course, 88% of Play Wales funding came directly from the Welsh Assembly Government (£370,000.00 out of £417,000.00) and on the Charities Commission website they state that they are a 'Welsh Assembly Government funded organisation.' and your government founded the organisation in its present format in 1997. The Minister for Children should be investigating a government funded charity that teaches dangerous play, shows films containing inappropriate behaviour towards children, and employs solicitors to refuse Freedom of Information requests. Basically your play policy is managed 'child abuse'.

To conclude I am accusing the Minister for Children etc, Huw Irranca-Davies of negligence in his role as Minister for Children. I understand that you are trained in law and that your government will pour money down the drain to twist my words and protect Huw Irranca-Davies but I'm sure the other Assembly Members copied to this letter will get the idea and fingers crossed their integrity is intact and they will ask the correct questions in the Senedd.

Moving on, and back to yourself, further research has of course identified that Play Wales have passed on the responsibility of their 'playing with fire' and 'deep play' to you, and by you, I mean you personally, Jeremy Miles, because as I write, to the best of my knowledge you are the only member of the Welsh Assembly Government who is aware of 'deep play' and also that it has been mis-represented from its original source and as such I suspect if a child should die whilst you are the only one who knows, and you have done nothing about it, then it is possible that you will be guilty of manslaughter, because I will be the first one to put my hand up and say "I told him so on the 5th and 7th July, here's the evidence". The paper trail on your knowledge of this information starts with my email on 7 July, however I provided you and your colleague with enough information on the 5 July 2019 for you to be concerned enough to possibly mention it to the First Minister when you met with him on the 7 July 2019 at the TUC Wales event in Tredegar. If you failed to do so, this is your problem because I don't doubt for a second that you understand the importance of the information I provided you with having studied in law and being aware of your government's role in championing the rights of children to play. This is the reason why I initially approached you, having trained in law, I thought you would understand. However, it would seem you prefer to choose the political career of others above the lives of Welsh children.

Paragraph 3. I am deeply concerned that you have ignored the evidence I have provided to you and your conclusion is that you "agree to read around this subject matter more broadly". It is my opinion that you should be working like a dog to either prove me wrong or to prove me right and then to put things right. This is not a constituency matter, this is a national matter, that concerns the whole of Wales. I informed you that I'd spent a year researching your government's policies and related information. I have far greater knowledge and understanding of this subject than you have and it would take you at least 3 months reading around the subject to get up to speed if you ever could. I have provided you with enough evidence for you to be concerned, incredulity is no excuse, all you need to do is to check the information I have provided you with against publications that are readily available to you, you've had two weeks in which to do this, you understand that your government has failed in its duty of care and it's time to start the clean up process.

With this in mind I am copying this letter to the remaining assembly members for our area as well as other selected assembly members. I will also be providing additional information to them. You should also be aware that I have started feeding the information I provided you into the education system, local government, private childcare facilities, sports clubs and other related organisations. It is only a matter of time before the media get hold of it, and if I don't feed them the information myself you can guarantee that someone else will.

Paragraph 1 - point 2 - In my email I provided you with the following information:

A link to an on-line resource containing the exchange of emails between myself and the Minister for children in which the minister continuously avoids answering the same question relating to children's play.

That I took a Play Wales / Adult Learning Wales course which included:

A film where children chased each other with fire, a child received burns from unsupervised play with fire. Children fighting over the use of hammers, children playing with dangerous tools. Bullying and children enclosed in a zoo type environment, some attempting to, but unable to escape from the bullies because they were locked into a play environment.

A film in which the course tutor acted inappropriately in a sexual manner towards a young child.

A system of deliberate delay in rescuing a child from a dangerous or life threatening situation.

Deliberate mis-representation of UNCRC Article 31, UNCRC General Comment 17 on Article 31 and Wales - a Play Friendly Country (2014).

No effective risk management strategy.

Elevation of the importance of play above the safety of children.

That children should resolve conflict themselves through any means.

The course tutor, a 60 year old woman constantly used the word "fuc*" and her catch phrase during the course was "if in doubt use fuc**** loose parts"

Loose parts is a form of play using rubbish as play equipment based on a Landscape and Architecture magazine article dated 1972, the author who had no background in children's play later died of alcohol poisoning. (Play Wales regard the US 'Landscape and Architecture' magazine as a scientific publication.)

The only forms of play taught during the L2APP course were: loose parts, playing with fire and placing children at risk during play where the playworker decides whether or not the child should be placed in a situation where they could die.

I provided you with a link to Youtube video where the author of "The First Claim", Bob 'the Burner' Hughes is giving a presentation of children's play in which he finds bullying entertaining and fails to recognise a child with clear signs of anxiety. I pointed out to you his inability to provide even a simple analysis of 'child's play'. I provided you a link to another video in which he says about children that "they need to burn their fingers".

I suggested that "you contact the Children's Play Officer of Swansea Council, Stephen Cable to set up a meeting with a few other Assembly

Members where I would provide information about how the L2APP course failed to meet the WAG & UNCRC guidelines through methods of manipulation and deception. I also suggested inviting the chairman of Play Wales trustees Mike Shooter. I requested the video "Pushing Eddie in the Nettles with Conor" to be shown so that you are able to see the type of play that Play Wales believe is suitable for Welsh children.

Paragraph 4 - You thanked me for providing you with a copy of my book. I gave you a copy of my book so that you would understand that I am good at making an analysis of the written word, In the book I make an analysis of a book that is comprised of letters with a commentary of the information contained in those letters and additional information. The book, a historical work is written by three barristers and a solicitor. A total of four people trained in law. They choose their words carefully and set out to prove a point which they are able to do to the man in the street during the reign of Victoria because they are persuasive and have a way with words. However, when subjected to analysis and the information contained in the book has been compared to original sources and additional information gained by thorough research, we understand why the men trained in law are chosen to write a historical work rather than the obvious choice of historians. They are chosen for their ability to win a case rather than tell the truth. We find that there is a general theme of deception and manipulation running through the book culminating in the forging of a letter by one of the four to prove the point. With this in mind, this letter deals with the content of your letter, I am also returning a copy of your letter with my analysis of its intent where we also find deception and manipulation. I hope you agree with my analysis, if not perhaps you return it with a counter analysis or even one of this section of the letter.

You have taken over two weeks to reply to my email, have focused on what I didn't say, not what I did say, and have agreed to 'read around the subject matter'. I informed you that this subject is time critical as children's lives are at stake especially now we are in the summer holiday period. The fact is you represent thousands of local children and it is they whom you should be protecting not a system of government that has placed them in danger. Any child burned by Welsh Assembly Government policies or any blood spilt during this current period of responsibility is on your hands. I hope I make myself clear.

Yours faithfully

Dai Richards (a concerned grand-parent)

www.dai-richards.wales

PS - As stated in my email of 7 July, I was previously embarrassed to be Welsh, now I am ashamed to be Welsh, but also I am now ashamed for my father, who was a member of the Labour party.

Section 2. My analysis of the intent of your letter dated 22 July 2019.

I enclose a copy of your letter with the points below numbered and corresponding to those in your letter for your information:

Points 1a & 1b - The focus of the letter is on my Friday visit to your surgery where we talked but no record was made of the conversation, it was not recorded. Your assistant was present who made notes, but whatever was said, it's yours and her word against mine. You start your letter with Friday, break off to mention the email on 7 July 2019 before immediately returning to Friday. I believe this is to keep the main content relating only to the unrecorded meeting of Friday and to avoid the content of my email. What gives your deception away are points 3a and 3b, in particular point 3b which is out of context because I didn't mention the Minister for Children in our Friday meeting. In a nutshell you focused on Friday to completely avoid the content of my email dated 7 July 2019 which pinpoints the Minister for Children's lack of integrity.

Point 2 - You mention my email dated 7 July, however none of the content is referenced, the email was composed on a word document and was 9 pages long, containing a mass of information on the subject of your government's play policies and links to further information and resources including the following:

THE MINISTER FOR CHILDREN

I have provided you with information so that your government can understand why it is in a position where your policies are a danger to the children of Wales. I am now offering your government a second opportunity to put your house in order, the first opportunity proved to me that there are members of your government who lack integrity and care only for themselves and not and not about Welsh children. It is unfortunate that this AM is the Minister for Children.

THE L2APP COURSE CONTENT

About the Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice:

The course content included:

A film where children chased each other with fire, a child received burns from unsupervised play with fire. Children fighting over the use of hammers, children playing with dangerous tools. Bullying and children enclosed in a zoo type environment, some attempting to escape from the bullies.

A film in which the course tutor acted inappropriately in a sexual manner towards a young child.

A system of deliberate delay in rescuing a child from a dangerous or life threatening situation.

Deliberate mis-representation of UNCRC Article 31, UNCRC General Comment 17 on Article 31 and Wales - a Play Friendly Country (2014).

No effective risk management strategy.

Elevation of the importance of play above the safety of children.

That children should resolve conflict themselves through any means.

The course tutor a 60 year old woman constantly used the word "fuc*" and her catch phrase during the course was "if in doubt use fuc**** loose parts". Loose parts is a form of play using rubbish as play equipment based on a Landscape and Architecture magazine article dated 1972, the author who had no background in children's play later died of alcohol poisoning.

The only forms of play taught were: loose parts, playing with fire and placing children at risk during play where the playworker decides whether or not the child should be placed in a situation where they could die.

DEEP PLAY

The course recommended "The First Claim" as additional reading for playworker's to improve their reflective practice and skills.

The First Claim includes a form of play known as 'deep play' which places children in life threatening situations.

Deep Play is part of the playwork curriculum, set by Play Wales and taught by Adult Learning Wales.

Both these charities are WAG funded.

The book 'The First Claim' is dated 2001

The earliest WAG play policy I can find that mentions risk is 2002. This states that children should not be placed at 'inappropriate risk'. If 'deep play' was already part of the playwork curriculum in 2001, then when the WAG

introduced risk into the play environment, as far as Play Wales and the WAG are concerned it must be considered an appropriate risk.

This means that your government policy for the last 17 years has been to place children in life threatening situations.

I asked you if you considered the following 'play scenarios' to be a good idea, you replied "no" to each of these meaning you did not think they were a good idea.

CHILDREN PLAYING IN FRONT OF TRAFFIC

RIDING A BIKE ON A PARAPET OF A BRIDGE

RIDING A BIKE THROUGH A FIRE

HIGH TREE CLIMBING, ESPECIALLY OVER RIVERS OR THE SEA

PLAY IN WHICH THE STAKES ARE SO HIGH, THAT IS..
IRRATIONAL .. TO ENGAGE IN IT AT ALL

I provided you with evidence that the author of the book 'The First Claim' had misrepresented the article from which he coined the play type 'deep play'.

BOB HUGHES - author of "The First Claim"

A link to a Bob Hughes video where he says of bullying

"EVERYONE ELSE CALLS IT BULLYING, I CALL IT LIVING IN A PLACE WHERE THERE IS A HIERARCHY"

"THE THING THAT I FIND ENTERTAINING ABOUT THIS (BULLYING) IS THAT PEOPLE FIND IT DIFFICULT TO COPE WITH"

and where he is unable to define how children are playing.

(Note: this video is dated 10 years after he wrote "The First Claim", which means 10 years previously he knew even less about play when he sentenced Welsh children to dice with death)

Information about a video in which Bob Hughes says about children that "they need to burn their fingers".

Point 3a - has returned to Friday's meeting which was about providing you with information. You mention that 'I did not wish to accept your offer to make enquiries' so that you can ignore the content of my email dated 7 July, please see point 2 above.

Point 3b - You are attempting to protect Huw Irranca-Davies by avoiding the content of my email and returning to the meeting on Friday stating that I had not made allegations against any individual Welsh Government ministers. My point here is, you have introduced the fact that I never made an allegation against Huw Irranca-Davies on the 5 July 2019 meeting because I did in my email of 7 July. But you believe that you've managed to avoid this allegation by focusing on what didn't happen in the Friday meeting and ignoring the content of my email, see point 2.

Point 4 - I'm afraid there are plenty of generalizations here but no specifics, no date about when you will complete your enquiries, not even a promise about making enquiries. Clearly this paragraph is a delaying tactic hoping your problem will go away.

Point 5 - An attempt to make me feel good, let's end on a positive note, thanks for sharing, you wrote a publication.

Point 6 - You say that I attended your surgery to discuss my research in relation to Play Wales. My recollection is that I provided you with information about the Welsh Assembly Government so you could understand why it's policies are life endangering to the children of Wales. Whilst 'Play Wales' plays a major part in the role of placing children in life endangering situations, it is your government that is funding this organisation and are accepting the advice of Play Wales in relation to these policies without conducting due diligence in investigating it's content. I specifically provided you with evidence of the life endangering 'deep play' to which you do not refer in your letter.

I offer you the opportunity to make a counter analysis otherwise I will be publishing that you too lack integrity.

Analysis completed by David Richards.