

ELGC COV17

Ymchwiliad i COVID-19 a'i effaith

Inquiry into COVID-19 and its impact

Ymateb gan: Ethnic Minorities & Youth Support Team in Wales

Response from: Tîm Cymorth Lleiafrifoedd Ethnig & Ieuenctid Cymru



**Ethnic Minorities  
& Youth Support  
Team Wales**

Tîm Cymorth  
Lleiafrifoedd Ethnig  
& Ieuenctid Cymru

## **All Wales BAME Engagement Programme Response to Equalities, Local Government & Communities Committee Inquiry Impact of COVID 19 Crisis in Wales**

### **1: About EYST Wales**

EYST Wales is an award-winning Wales wide charity established since 2005 which aims to support ethnic minority young people, families and individuals living in Wales and help them to contribute, participate and feel a valued part of Wales. It does this through a range of services targeted variously at ethnic minority young people, ethnic minority families, refugees and asylum seekers and also the wider public.

EYST Wales coordinates the All Wales BAME (Black Asian Minority Ethnic) Engagement Programme, a project funded by Welsh Government to gather views and experiences of BAME people living in Wales and improve the evidence base from which to positively influence public policies and services to better reflect the needs of BAME communities. This project is one of seven Welsh Government Equalities and Inclusion Grants.

During April 2020, the All Wales BAME Engagement Programme hosted weekly online topical fora on the impact of COVID 19 on BAME people and communities in Wales, a series attended by a collective 230 participants. These forums focussed on the following topics: general impact, impact on Muslim communities, impact on employment & businesses, impact on children/pupils and young people/students, food security and community cohesion/racism/hate crime. Following are key points from these fora as well as additional intelligence from EYST project work.

EYST request to give oral evidence for the Equalities, Local Government and Communities committee in relation to this enquiry.

### **1: Tackling Poverty**

- Free School Meals – Initially, there was much confusion over free school meal provision. The updated guidance from the Education Minister was welcome though many would like the Minister to provide stronger messages for local authorities to opt

for offering a mixed cash/voucher offer for free school meals. Currently 17/22 local authorities are offering cash provision or a cash/voucher option for FSM, but there are still a few local authorities operating on parcel provision. The consensus from representatives in the EYST forums is that a mixed offer of cash or voucher options is the optimum.

- Food security for asylum seekers, new refugees and low-income families: These families will not have money to do bulk shopping if needed for self-isolation or to compete with other consumers who are panic buying. Likewise, low income people who were working in informal economy, particularly hospitality sector will not have had the opportunity to be furloughed and will have been made jobless and incomeless very quickly and at risk of destitution.
- Any provision of food parcels must consider, cultural, religious, and medical food needs. The best efforts to provide culturally and medically appropriate food seem to be accomplished by organising at the local level by community groups. Likewise, via food some banks. This seems to work best for people when there are solid networks and good communication between food initiatives at a local level. For instance, Cardiff, Newport, and Swansea all have networks of foodbanks and initiatives with leadership from organisations such as Food Cardiff and/or local councils. It has been repeatedly brought up that WG food parcels for people who are shielding do not consider religious or medical dietary needs. WG are aware of this problem, but as yet there seems to be no resolution.
- Universal credit claims have increased and the queues for processing are unprecedented with worries that the usually five week waiting period will turn into additional weeks. It is welcome that DAF rules have been relaxed, but there were questions in our forum if people could readily access DAF if they didn't have support to do so or had done so before, particularly for people with English as an additional language.
- The relaxation on restrictions to provide housing to people with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) is welcome. However, Welsh Government should give clear direction to local authorities on exactly what support beyond housing people with NRPF can access. Local authorities are all trying to work out separately what exactly is legal, and this is taking precious time whereby people need additional support for livelihood. Likewise, Welsh Government should provide definitive advice (not just a suggestion) for local authorities to provide NRPF families with FSM.
- There are serious concerns about what happens to NRPF families post-COVID. We were presented with some evidence that people subject to NRPF were not seeking assistance with local authorities because they are afraid of being unhoused at short notice. On another note, there have been many women able to escape from domestic violence and/or trafficking in this period as they now can receive refuge. What will happen to them and their children if they no longer qualify for that refuge? Welsh Government should use this opportunity to collect evidence relating to this relaxation

on restriction for people subject to NRPF and influence Westminster to end NRPF for good.

- There are concerns about risk of destitution for people who were working off the books, have now been let go and will not have access to furlough pay. Predominantly concern for people working for restaurants. This can potentially have a knock-on impact of destitution for asylum seekers and new refugees.

### **3: EQUITY IN EMPLOYMENT & ECONOMY**

- There are big concerns that BAME people will be disproportionately affected by unemployment and loss of business and that BAME employees and business owners (particularly new businesses) will face barriers and institutional discrimination in accessing COVID 19 related relief.
- Some are worried their applications will be rejected in the same way that employment applications are (based on “foreign” name).
- There is also concern about BAME people being able to access advice for COVID related relief and benefits. For instance, no one is aware of provision of advice in a language other than English. In one forum, it was noted that many Chinese small business owners, particularly in restaurant industry, are having a hard time accessing advice on COVID 19 related benefits and applying for universal credit due to language barriers. Business Wales does have a fund to provide translation on phone calls, but as of mid-April they were experiencing high volume of calls and having trouble keeping up.
- All public bodies, including Welsh Government and local authorities should make the process to apply for COVID 19 related benefits transparent. WE recommend that Welsh Government ensure robust ethnicity monitoring and reporting for all COVID related relief or benefits as part of its Public Sector Equality. Leadership in relation to COVID 19 related projects must give clear instruction that protected characteristics of beneficiaries must be collected.
- BAME people and migrants are over-represented in essential worker sectors such as health and social care, distribution, transport, food processing, food delivery, etc, particularly in precarious professions in the gig economy and low pay sectors. This is extremely troubling, given the clear evidence BAME people are vastly overrepresented in critical care COVID patients. There are additional concerns with employer practices in these essential, low sectors:
  - There is evidence that people classed as essential workers are being asked by their employers to work without PPE and that some employers are not following social distance guidelines.

- There is evidence that some employers are classifying their workers as key workers even though that case may be shaky.
  - There are widespread concerns about EU people being demanded to work in unsafe conditions by their employers. A representative from one local authority reported that they were aware of a lot of complaints regarding employer practices and safeguarding of EU nationals.
  - There is evidence that people are being pressured by employers to work even though they feel the working environment is unsafe for them – or that the worker may make other persons in their household unsafe by bringing COVID 19 home from that working environment.
  - There are no guidelines which require employers to furlough workers who live with someone who has had a “shielding” letter.
  - Furloughing vs. Redundancy – There are also concerns about people losing jobs with the employer not taking the consideration of furlough as an option. There was early confusion among some employers about furlough and who qualifies and how it works. Likewise, there is a perception that some employers are taking advantage of the opportunity to cull staff numbers. Likewise, there are big concerns for furloughed workers who may not be paid until June, particularly if they work for micro-businesses or small businesses.
  - Provision of PPE: There was consensus that that provision of PPE is a big issue – to not just NHS workers but all key workers – including in factories, delivery, retail. We understand that Welsh Government has given clear directive that employers must provide appropriate PPE to key workers in Health and Social Care, but we have heard very recent stories of workers in those and many sectors, including EU migrant workers in factories not getting sufficient PPE. WG guidelines state that workers may petition to their line manager if they feel they are not getting sufficient PPE or phone a national number to report it. Workers in temporary, low paying or casual work are afraid to question their employers.
  - Racism and discrimination in the workplace: There are concerns that individual and institutional implicit bias is affecting treatment of BAME and migrant employees in the workplace. Workers in low paying and/or precarious positions such as agency workers or those on zero hours contracts are afraid to use the mechanisms in place to challenge, bias, discrimination, or racial harassment in their workplaces.
  - A clear point of contact with support in multiple languages to ethnic minority and migrant employees who feel they face discrimination or unfair treatment in the workplace could ensure that employment inequity is not exacerbated due to COVID 19.
  - WG must ensure proper risk assessments of key workers in ALL sectors and pay grades and have a robust monitoring system to ensure that employers are correctly assessing and minimising risk to all workers and including all risk factors in those assessments.
- Evidence, including that from the aftermath of the 2008 recession, shows that ethnic minority people experience higher unemployment rates during recessions are more

likely to go jobless for a longer period. Efforts to rebuild the economy post-COVID 19 need to account for and take steps to remedy this inequality.

- Important to hold onto (and grow) the gains that emerge during this crisis
  - After lockdown finishes, what will be next steps?
  - There is current socio-political debate about work being properly recognised and rewarded in a range of historically low paying and low valued sectors which have large number of BAME workers.
  - The COVID 19 bill has presented an unprecedented increase in unemployment benefits. We should fight to keep these as standard employee benefits .
  - We should also argue to expand living standards generally – for all people working and non-working.

### **3: EQUITY IN EDUCATION**

#### **Digital Access to Educational Materials and Support**

- Access to Digital Equipment and Broadband – We were pleased to see the financial commitment and clear direction from Education Minister Kirsty Williams that local authorities provide. Now it is imperative that schools locate and provide this equipment for all families who need it with deliberate speed. Many families have lost weeks of home schooling due to the time lapse in response to this issue. Third sector organisations and grassroots organisations may be of assistance in assuring that all families who need it are reached.
- Language can be a huge barrier. Accessing school hubs and other online set ups is extremely difficult for parents who don't speak English fluently. Likewise, there are concerns for EAL pupils where no one at home speaks English. There is much concern, and rightly so, about Welsh medium pupils living in homes with no Welsh speakers. The same concern should be there for EAL pupils.
- Suggested solution: Employ or re-deploy teachers and teaching assistants who speak relevant modern foreign languages to support parents who are not fluent in English as well as EAL pupils. This support can be over phone, what's app or online meeting site such as Skype or Zoom. It may also be useful in engaging/keeping employed teaching assistants who were on temporary contracts and possibly not furloughed when schools closed.
- There is likely an under-reporting of parents' concerns over lack of access to online learning as parents with language barriers or who are not confident in engaging schools may not know how to approach them or have confidence to do so. Some schools report that they have had requests for laptops from families but not from BAME pupils/families. Are BAME parents not going back to the schools to make these queries?

- BAME community groups can facilitate communication between parents and schools. BAME groups need to get the word to parents that they should be communicating with schools about any barriers to accessing educational materials. Likewise, BAME groups can facilitate that communication where parents are not able to themselves. EYST are currently encouraging Third sector and grassroots groups to get messages to their networks that parents who have barriers to online learning, particularly digital exclusion should contact schools immediately.
- There were some concerns about differences in the quality of online learning provided by different schools, including concerns that this period of learning at home may exacerbate existing attainment gaps between certain groups of pupils – with pupils from already high performing schools in wealthy areas where parents and potentially schools have access to more resources compared to those of pupils from relatively low performing schools in deprived areas. Additional considerations such as EAL add extra dimensions to this problem. To note, recent Sutton Trust research shows that since schools closed, 30% of middle class pupils in England have had access to daily online live or recorded classes compared to 16% of working class students and that less than 50% of parents without an HE qualification felt confident supporting their child’s learning<sup>1</sup>.
- We understand that these are unprecedented times and we appreciate the heartfelt and concerted efforts by educators and the team in the Welsh Government education department to provide continuity of learning for children in Wales in these circumstances. We appreciate that the WG Education “Policy Statement on Continuity of Learning” pledges to “seek to ensure as far as possible that no learner is disadvantaged because of access to technology, where they live, their age, their special educational needs, the language of their school or home, or their demographic profile” and to centralise principles of inclusion are central to the delivery of the programme and the return to school. We eagerly await specific plans to develop staff, content and strategies to deliver those goals. As such, we would recommend that WG adopt some of the strategies recommended by Sutton Trust to flatten the curve between advantaged and disadvantaged learners, including ethnic minority learners, in this period (in addition to solutions already referenced above): train teachers to be enabled to deliver online content, stamp out the digital divide, give disadvantaged pupils access to online 1-1 or small group tuition, consider running ‘catch up’ classes for children who need it over the summer or when schools return.

**Discrepancies in definitions of ‘Key Workers’  
Concerns about Access to Childcare/Schooling Coming Out of Lockdown**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/covid-19-and-social-mobility-impact-brief/>

- There were also concerns about how local authorities are defining key workers and whether families who qualify for key worker childcare are taking up that option. Are BAME families having their eligibility communicated to them and being made confident to consider the offer? Also, what will happen to low income parents if schools are still closed when their sector begins a return to workplace? Many jobs in sectors such as manufacturing and retail are low paid jobs and these parents may not be able to pay for childcare. Will the definition of eligibility to send children to school/childcare hubs change?

### **Cancellation of exams and potential bias in predicted grades and previous assessments**

- Summer 2020 GCSE and A level exams have been cancelled and there is guidance that schools will assess individual learner grades and rank according to previous work and teacher estimates of their likely performance if Summer 2020 exams were taking place.
- Many young ethnic minority people, particularly young people of African descent, are extremely concerned about teachers' predicted grades. Numerous research studies show that teachers are more likely to underestimate the performance of students from low socio-economic backgrounds and from certain ethnic groups (especially Black and Gypsy, Roma, Traveller pupils) in comparison to pupil's actual exam performance. Some scholars connect this dynamic with lower representation of certain groups at more competitive universities and degree programmes.
- Several attendees at EYST's recent forums knew close family members or friends who had the experience of outperforming teachers' predicted grades on high stakes exams. One parent at our Children/Young People/Pupil forum shared her child's previous experience of passing with As, Bs and Cs, despite being predicted to fail at GCSEs. This same child is having the same experience of low predicted A level grades and the current situation is "very distressing."
- Pupils are concerned that they won't get the necessary grades to attend university or progress to the next steps in their education or employment pathways in the fall. For young people who have put everything into preparing for high stakes exams to gain university entrance – there is a huge mental health impact as, all of a sudden, they now feel gaining that entrance is beyond their control.
- There are concerns that some young people in Wales who do not get sufficient grades to enter university in fall may drop out of university pathways altogether rather than repeat a year. This phenomenon may impact an entire cohort of BAME young people, with a risk of rise in NEET young people from BAME backgrounds in coming years.

- EYST is responding the Qualifications Wales (QW) consultation on assessment proposals for Summer 2020 with the following suggestions for revision of their proposals:
  - QW must work with the Minister for Education to provide teachers with guidance and support on how to ensure more accurate assessments and ranking of students in order to reduce inconsistencies across groups of pupils in schools and across schools;
  - QW must work with the Minister for Education to provide schools with guidance and support to undertake equality impact assessments before and after final exam grade assessments as part of their Public Sector Equality Duty;
  - Remind schools of their Public Sector Equality Duty;
  - WJEC must use anonymised and disaggregated data on protected characteristics, including SES and SEN from schools to undertake equality impact assessments and investigate discrepancies in outcomes both relating to assessments/ranks provided by schools and to final grades after WJEC's statistical standardisation modelling;
  - There must be an avenue of appeal for any individual student who feels they have been underestimated or feels they have experienced bias or discrimination in their assessment, no matter what the reason for that bias.
  
- In a multi-agency letter to the Education Minister, EYST did request that she provide guidance to schools do equality impact assessments on predicted grades. Her return letter, though very positive about responding to needs of digitally excluded students, was less specific about commitment to address potential teacher and institutional bias in the Summer 2020 assessment system.
  
- Likewise, there is potential to challenge universities to adapt the way in which they make decisions to fill student places – to ensure that they meet established diversity targets within departments and to assess in alternative mechanisms for recruitment decisions including contextualised admissions criteria. Clear guidance from HEFCW can encourage progressive vision and leadership in universities.

#### **4: HOUSING**

- Social class plays a huge part in whether people have the privilege to socially distance or stay at home.
- BAME families are more likely to live in over-crowded houses and more likely to live in intergenerational houses which makes self-isolation more difficult and also makes shielding of elderly and vulnerable people more difficult.



- Overcrowding will impact young people as they are unable to sit down and do homework in a quiet space and may also be more likely to feel compelled to go outside for cramped space or lack of garden. This includes young people seeking asylum who live in shared accommodation.
- Disproportionate impact on Roma families living in crowded houses where in normal circumstances, adults would expect young people to be outside of the house in daytimes, but they are now required to stay indoors.

## **5: EQUITY IN HEALTH**

- There is clear evidence of the disproportionate impact of COVID 19 on BAME people, including in infection rates, higher critical care rates and death rates. These disparities are extremely unacceptable with Black African people 4 times more and Pakistani 2 times more likely to die from COVID 19 than White British peers. There are likely many overlapping factors to this extremely concerning phenomenon including decades of institutional racism, socio-economic factors (which also relate to underlying health conditions), housing conditions, environmental justice (living in areas of high air pollution, etc.) and the over-representation of BAME people in key frontline sectors including health and social care. Most NHS COVID related deaths have been BAME people, many with high profile media coverage. Likewise, there has been much media coverage of families including one in Gwent where multiple members in the same family have died within days of each other. The fact that this disproportionate impact is happening is due to decades of structural inequality.
- Quote from EYST forum: “For years and years, people engaging in work in the racial equality sector have reported a combination of disadvantage and inequality for ethnic minority people and it is still happening.”
- BAME people are over-represented in NHS staff, including among low paying frontline tiers. BAME people are also over-represented in other essential/frontline sectors (such as cleaning, social care, transport, including low paying ones, which have been undervalued until now.)
- One forum attendee had many family members who are nurses or workers in social care, who feel they are unable to say “No” to situations they feel dangerous, such as situations in care home where they have no protective equipment. They are exposed to COVID 19 even though they are more vulnerable to getting virus.
- An UK wide enquiry into disproportionate impact of COVID 19 on BAME people is welcome, but there must be accessible, disaggregated data for Wales, so that where possible, researchers can investigate the dynamics of COVID 19 in Wales. There is wide-spread consensus on this point amongst attendees of EYST’s recent forums.

- There are concerns about key health messages and information about services being shared, particularly to vulnerable child patients with existing health conditions. Following is an example from volunteers with 'Friends of Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia': Members are already marginalised are not getting information from consultants regarding their vulnerability. They haven't received any guidance/letters and are more disadvantaged if they have more regular hospital appointments and aren't aware of processes involved. She is frightened for her community at this time. "We are looking for ways to get them the information, but it shouldn't be on us. It really highlights how marginalised our communities are."
- Though guidance on COVID 19 health and safety is available in many languages. There is a lack of material on well being available in languages other than English and Welsh.
- Proposed solutions:
  - Ensure a speedy, robust and fair enquiry into disproportionate impact of COVID 19 on BAME people/communities in general and also on BAME key workers. Even though Wales will participate in an enquiry with England, disaggregated data for Wales must be accessible. Likewise, Welsh Government should argue for the replacement of Trevor Phillips who has recently been suspended from his party for Islamophobic comments.
  - As an urgent matter, ensure that keyworkers in all frontline sectors have sufficient access to both PPE and non-symptomatic COVID 19 testing for themselves and household members.
  - Also, in the phased easing of lockdown, ensure that a robust general community testing and contact tracing system is in place. Ideally have free tests for anyone who is unable to work from home. Any plans for community-based testing regimes must be equality impact assessed to ensure they don't exclude people with low wealth/income or protected characteristics and do, in fact, reach people who may be more at risk from COVID 19 complications.
  - Campaign for fair work commission principles, higher wages and better working conditions in those low paying frontline sectors where BAME people are over-represented, including in the NHS and Health and Social Care.
  - Encourage Welsh Government to highlight contributions of migrants and BAME people on COVID 19 frontline in its regular communications or as a specific campaign.

## **7: Racism and Hate Crime**

- Indications that street-based hate crime has declined since lockdown orders may be masking other dynamics. There has been an increase in online hate, both noticed by participants in EYST's online forums and documented by Cardiff University's HateLab.

Likewise, there is evidence from grassroots organisations of people experiencing increased abuse from neighbours. Victim Support notes that clients they are currently supporting are mainly experiencing neighbour related abuse, rendering them, “prisoners in own home,” afraid to go in back gardens or on daily walks because they do not feel safe in their neighbourhood. People experiencing this are reluctant to phone police either thinking the case is trivial or fear of escalating tension and reactions from neighbour.

- Many think that hate crime reporting is currently low because people are living in fear of uncertainty and reporting is last thing on their agenda, as they are struggling to survive. There is wide consensus of the importance of encouraging and supporting people to report hate crime, including using 101, online reporting and Third party reporting.
- There has been some stereotyping of Muslim communities, particularly in relation to Ramadan. Rumours are circulating in multiple platforms/spaces that COVID 19 will peak during Ramadan because Muslim community is gathering and socialising. Mis/disinformation spreads quickly now that people are spending more time than ever online. In some cases, wider community which is becoming aware disproportionate impact of COVID 19 on BAME people, especially in particular parts of Wales such as Newport, is engaging in victim blaming. On some occasions, questions are raised as to whether BAME and/or Muslim people are social distancing or aware of public messages. Those may be questions to be asked but can quickly become victim blaming. This is a worrying trend to be aware of.
- Children and Young People are spending more time than ever online. In a recent online forum, young people in Wrexham brought attention to the troubling spread of online racism. “Anti-black racism spreads fast online.” Some of this material is hateful such as depictions of violence against people of African descent in Wuhan, China. Some are clips that stereotype and purport to make light of stereotypes. Many of the young people in the forum expressed discomfort and hurt from stereotyping clips. Tiktok was mentioned as a forum where this plays out and noted that Tiktok seems to provide little oversight of content and felt that reporting process was worthless. Young people need support to protect themselves from online bullying and racist incidents and to report and stand up to online racism and hate.

### ***6: Human Rights Impact of Legislation***

1. Many anxieties by the BAME community who are already living in a hostile environment. The new Coronavirus legislation is very draconian and worrying many people. They have seen the images of troops on streets in London. Heard about the government enforced self-isolation, which again could impact BAME communities disproportionately, given they already face systematic racism and structural discrimination. Need messaging on this.
2. Under the new legislation, there will be changes in the regulations around sectioning people under the Mental Health Act. BAME communities are already

disproportionately impacted. If police are given special powers to remove the need for a mental health nurse and social workers to sign off, we will see a big leap in the number of BAME people being affected. There are many examples of police failure and for communities to now hear the police will have further powers to detain and enforce, will become hugely problematic. This needs careful managing and messaging as people still remember when after 7/7 'Shoot to Kill' was brought in.

3. People are very fearful of being deported, including many Windrush generations and families. Likewise, dependents of work permit holders may be at risk of deportation. This includes dependents of NHS workers who die due to COVID 19.
4. Community members are concerned that the expansion of police powers in relation to lockdown may be used disproportionately on ethnic minority people, particularly young Black people. They correctly note that young ethnic minority men are far over-represented in stop and search incidents. And that ethnic minority people are more likely to live in crowded houses and or lack of garden space. Several experts at prominent racial equality organisations such as Runnymede Trust have written articles for mainstream news outlets noting this very real risk.
5. The Coronavirus Act has passed and has gone through The Assembly. We need to think about how we monitor the impact of the Act and the pandemic, particularly the impact on human rights and equalities. Essential to share information and and prepare for the 6-month review of the Act.
6. The EHRC have made the decision to tell public bodies in Wales that they do not need to publish their strategic equality plans or their annual report by April 2020. This will be reviewed in October 2020.
7. There was consensus at EYST forums and in a number of other networks that current Covid 19 disruption offers opportunity to demand Government to consider Wifi an essential household utility and ask for it to be provided not only to asylum seekers but also to other low-income and digitally households as a matter of a human right.

## **7: Recommendations & Solutions**

### **Tackling Poverty & Equity in Employment & Economy**

- Give stronger advice to local authorities to provide cash or voucher choice to families in receipt of FSM.
- Support locally organised food and culturally responsive food initiatives
- Argue for abolition of NRPF.
- Raise income floor level for key worker sectors which are currently low paid
- Ensure the equitable accessibility of COVID 19 related relief and benefits. Robustly monitor and report on the beneficiaries of that relief via protected characteristic, income and business size.
- Keep gains in benefits related to COVID 19 and also argue to expand standard of living for all people working and non-working. This may include consideration transformative changes in the way the social floor is maintained such as Universal basic income.

- Share positive stories such as BAME owned small businesses providing food to NHS workers and migrants and BAME employees who work in food processing, agricultural and distribution sectors making sure that the food supply chain is operational and that vulnerable people access food they need.
- Build on those stories to argue for better valuation of these livelihoods.
- WG must ensure proper risk assessments of key workers in ALL sectors and pay grades and have a robust monitoring system to ensure that employers are correctly assessing and minimising risk to all workers and including all risk factors in those assessments.

#### **Equity in Education – Support for Learners**

- With utmost speed, ensure that all children who need who need it have laptops and Wi-Fi.
- Employ or re-deploy teachers and teaching assistants who speak relevant modern foreign languages to support parents who are not fluent in English as well as EAL pupils.
- BAME community groups can facilitate connections and communication between parents and schools.
- Train teachers to be enabled to deliver online class sessions.
- Consider 1-1 or small group online sessions for disadvantaged pupils
- Consider “catch-up” classes for disadvantaged pupils over the summer or when schools return

#### **Equity in Education – 2020 Grades and University Entrance**

- Qualifications Wales (QW) must work with the Minister for Education to provide teachers with guidance and support on how to ensure more accurate assessments and ranking of students in order to reduce inconsistencies across groups of pupils in schools and across schools;
- QW must work with the Minister for Education to provide schools with guidance and support to undertake equality impact assessments before and after final exam grade assessments as part of their Public Sector Equality Duty;
- Remind schools of their Public Sector Equality Duty;
- WJEC must use anonymised and disaggregated data on protected characteristics, including SES and SEN from schools to undertake equality impact assessments and investigate discrepancies in outcomes both relating to assessments/ranks provided by schools and to final grades after WJEC’s statistical standardisation modelling;
- There must be an avenue of appeal for any individual student who feels they have been underestimated or feels they have experienced bias or discrimination in their assessment, no matter what the reason for that bias.
- HEFCW must give guidance for university recruitment practices to achieve widening access agendas and ensure recruitment and further support for under-represented groups.

**Health:**

- Ensure a speedy, robust and fair enquiry into disproportionate impact of COVID 19 on BAME people/communities in general and also on BAME key workers. Even though Wales will participate in an enquiry with England, disaggregated data for Wales must be accessible. Likewise, Welsh Government should argue for the replacement of Trevor Phillips, recently suspended from Labour party for Islamophobia.
- Ensure that keyworkers in all frontline sectors have sufficient access to both PPE and non-symptomatic testing for themselves and household members.
- Ensure a robust general community testing and contact tracing system is in place with free tests available to workers who cannot practice social distance and people at heightened risk of contracting COVID 19.
- Campaign for fair work commission principles, higher wages and better working conditions in those low paying frontline sectors where BAME parents are over-represented.
- Encourage Welsh Government to highlight contributions of migrants and BAME people on COVID 19 frontline in its regular communications or as a specific campaign.
- Young people need support to protect themselves from online bullying and racist incidents and to report and stand up to online racism and hate.

#### **Human Rights**

- Challenge the Home Office hostile environment in relation to immigration. Petition that the Home Office end Windrush related deportations and do not deport dependent family members of work-permit holders who die from COVID 19.
- Robustly monitor the enforcement of the COVID 19 bill, particularly the use of expanded police powers. Monitor and report on the effect on ethnic minority people and communities.
- Require public bodies to collect and report on equalities related data in relation to COVID 19 relief efforts.
- Use this moment to reframe and expand upon human rights, such as expanding worker (and nonworker) right to standard of living, rights to basic utilities such as WiFi, right to just remuneration of work, right to safety at work.
- Use this moment as a possibility to reimagine how risk and reward could be more justly distributed amongst classes of people in society as a result of this crisis.