

GUIDE TO THE WELSH YOUTH PARLIAMENT

**SCHOOLS, COLLEGES,
YOUTH WORKERS, PARENTS,
GUARDIANS**

**WELSH
YOUTH
PARLIAMENT**

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A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN WALES

From debating and discussing issues with their peers to delivering a speech in the Senedd Chamber. The work of the Welsh Youth Parliament provides young people in Wales, between the age of 11 up to 18, with an array of unique opportunities.

Taking part in the Welsh Youth Parliament Elections may be the first time for some young people to debate and discuss issues that matter to them with their friend and as part of a democratic process.

For others it may be an opportunity to gain confidence and experience in debating and highlighting these issues in a way which can make a difference to the future of young people in Wales.

"It has been a truly incredible experience that has provided us all with so much, and helped young people across Wales find their voice."

Evan Burgess

Welsh Youth Parliament Member, 2018-2021

WHAT IS THE WELSH YOUTH PARLIAMENT?

The Welsh Youth Parliament (WYP) was established with the ideas and aspirations of young people in Wales central to its development. It is a unique opportunity for young people across Wales to get involved in leading the discussion on issues which matter to them.

“The Youth Parliament will give Wales’s young people a democratic voice at a national level and empower them to bring about change.”

Elin Jones MS
Llywydd of the Senedd

From the beginning young people in Wales have played a key role with over 5,000 young people taking part in a consultation to help decide what the Welsh Youth Parliament’s aim, membership, and work should be. This has led to forming a democratically elected Youth Parliament consisting of 60 Welsh Youth Parliament Members (WYPM).

“This is a great example of how we can strengthen our democracy by including young people in our discussions – you have a unique view point which deserves to be heard and considered.”

Mark Drakeford MS
First Minister of Wales

The first Welsh Youth Parliament elections were held in 2018 and following a further consultation with young people, and passionate speeches by all WYPMs in the Senedd Chamber. *Littering and Plastic Waste*, *Life Skills in the Curriculum* and *Emotional and Mental Health Support* were chosen as the three main topics the WYP would focus on.

During their two year term WYPMs have successfully championed the voice of young people on these and a number of other issues on a national platform.

You can read more about the forming of the WYP and the work done by its first elected members by visiting www.youthparliament.wales.



WELSH YOUTH PARLIAMENT ELECTION

The second Welsh Youth Parliament elections will be held in November 2021.

This election will give young people between the ages of 11 and up to 18 the opportunity to vote to choose a WYPM for their constituency. Individuals can also put their names forward to stand for election.

The 60 elected WYPMs will have a unique opportunity to make themselves heard at a national level. It will enable them to raise awareness of, and debate the issues important to young people in Wales today.

"I stood to be a member of the Welsh Youth Parliament because I'm committed to empowering young people and representing their views on the national stage on the issues that matter to them."

Jonathon Dawes

Welsh Youth Parliament Member, 2018-2021

By participating in issue based politics, children and young people will get to experience first-hand how politics works and the direct effect it can have on their lives.

Key dates for the election are:

VOTER REGISTRATION

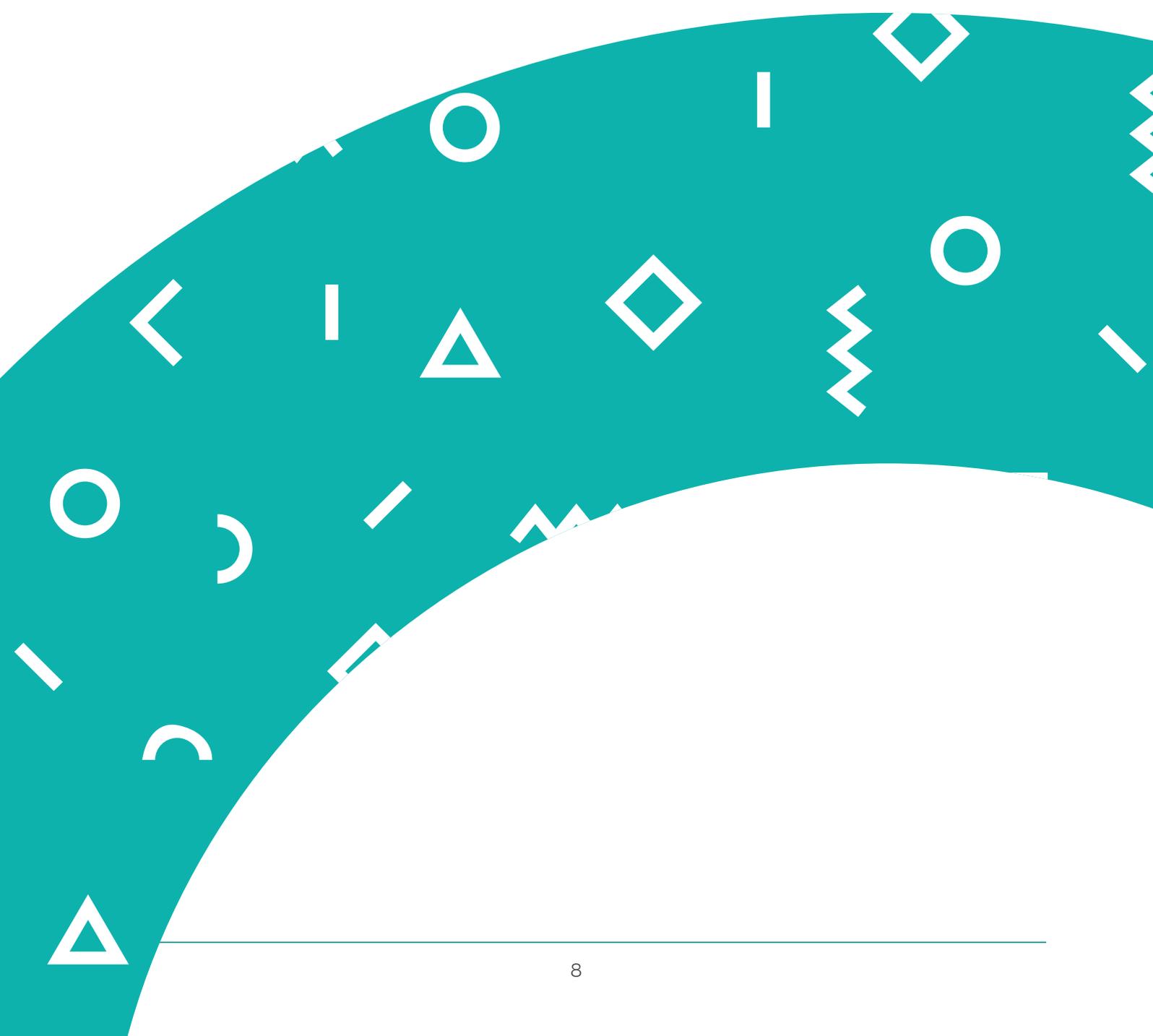
31 May 2021 to 12 November 2021

CANDIDATE NOMINATIONS

5 July 2021 to 20 September 2021

ON LINE VOTING

1 November 2021 to 22 November 2021



WHAT DOES THE WELSH YOUTH PARLIAMENT LOOK LIKE?

Like the Senedd, the Welsh Youth Parliament will be made up of 60 Members.

40 Welsh Youth Parliament Members will be elected by a 'First Past the Post' system, returning one young person for each electoral constituency in Wales.

Any young person that lives in, or receives their education in Wales, between the ages of 11 up to 18 will be able to stand as a candidate for one of the 40 constituency seats. If a young person wishing to stand for election receives their education in a different electoral constituency to their home address, they can choose which constituency they wish to stand for. You can find your constituency by going to www.senedd.wales/how-we-work/about-members-of-the-senedd/.

The remaining 20 seats will be elected by partner organisations to ensure the representation of diverse groups of young people. Further information regarding the partner organisation process can be found at www.youthparliament.wales.

All 60 Welsh Youth Parliament Members will have equal status, with the same roles and responsibilities in the Parliament.



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A WELSH YOUTH PARLIAMENT MEMBER?

The 60 WYPMs will work with young people from across Wales to identify, raise awareness of and debate issues that are important to young people across Wales.

“The Welsh Youth Parliament sends out a clear message to children and young people in Wales that they are important citizens with a part to play in the governance of our nation”.

Sally Holland
Children’s Commissioner For Wales

Members of the Welsh Youth Parliament will:

- Engage with young people in their area.
- Decide on the main priority issues of the Welsh Youth Parliament.
- Speak up on issues they feel passionate about. Issue based politics is central to the work of the WYP, Members are not elected to represent political parties.
- Have the opportunity to take part in and speak at events, and media engagements during their time.
- Support other Welsh Youth Parliament Members.
- Discuss issues with Members of the Senedd and Welsh Government
- Contribute to the work of Senedd committees.
- Help children and young people understand how the Senedd and the Welsh Youth Parliament work, and the impact they have on the lives of people in Wales.

- Meet together as a full Welsh Youth Parliament three times over the two-year term.
- Meet at regional level and at engagement events every 2-3 months. Meet either face to face or virtually to discuss and progress the issues prioritised by WYPMs. The first WYP decided to work in issue committees and met virtually using Microsoft Teams or Zoom during the final year. Newly elected WYPMs will decide how they want to organise themselves.
- Represent young people in a positive way.



REPRESENTING THE FUTURE OF WALES

Wales is broken down into 40 smaller areas called constituencies. Young people will be able to nominate themselves to stand for election to represent these constituencies.

These constituencies are arranged into four regions of Wales. Young people will regularly meet and work with other Welsh Youth Parliament Members from their local region.

"The experience of representing young people from across my constituency and beyond has been amazing."

Maisy Evans

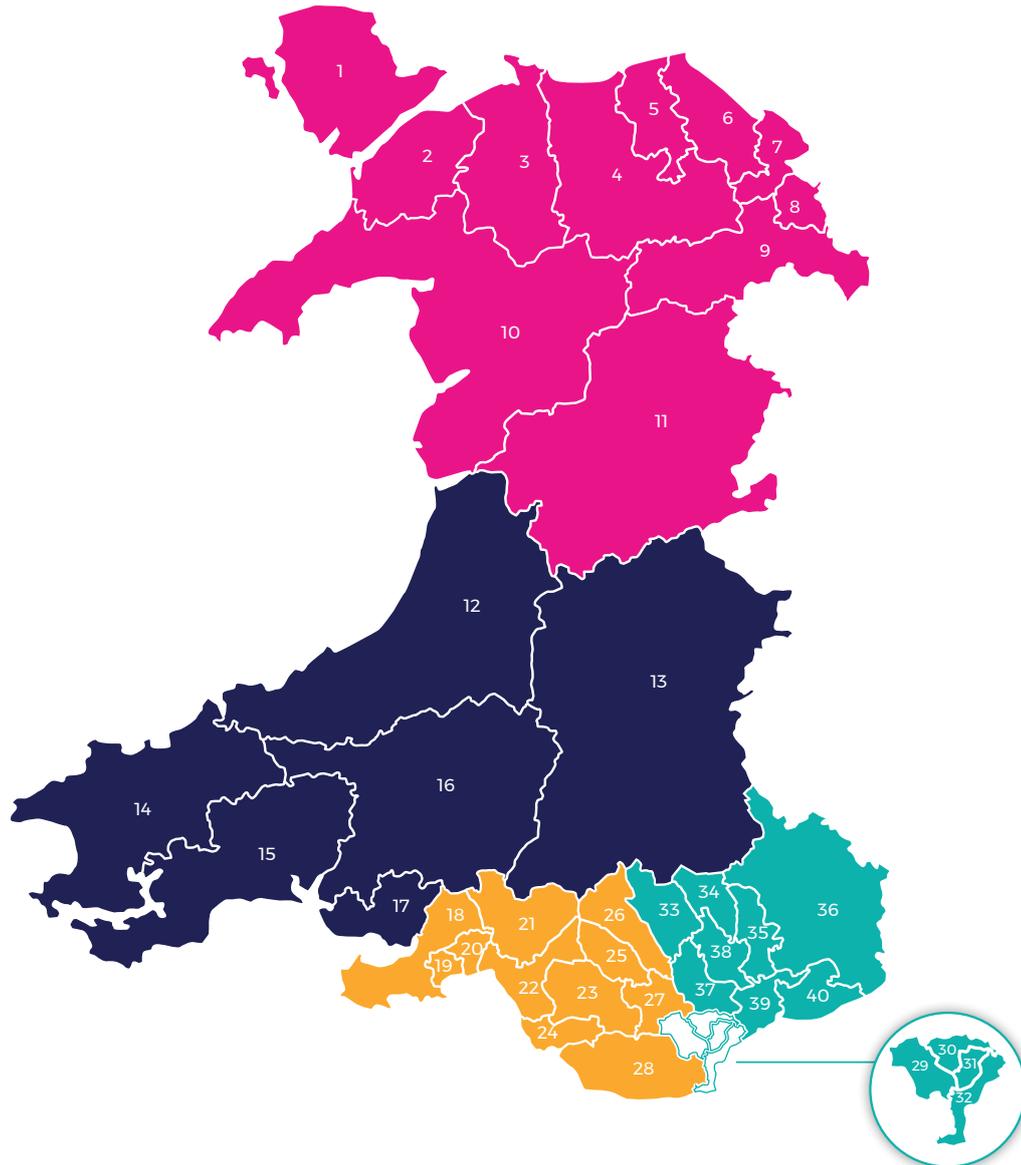
Welsh Youth Parliament Member, 2018-2021

NORTH WALES:

1. Ynys Môn
2. Arfon
3. Aberconwy
4. Clwyd West
5. Vale of Clwyd
6. Delyn
7. Alyn and Deeside
8. Wrexham
9. Clwyd South
10. Dwyfor Meirionydd
11. Montgomeryshire

MID WALES:

12. Ceredigion
13. Brecon and Radnorshire
14. Preseli Pembrokeshire
15. Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire
16. Carmarthen East and Dinefwr
17. Llanelli



SOUTH-WEST WALES:

- 18. Gower
- 19. Swansea West
- 20. Swansea East
- 21. Neath
- 22. Aberavon
- 23. Ogmore
- 24. Bridgend
- 25. Rhondda
- 26. Cynon Valley
- 27. Pontypridd
- 28. Vale of Glamorgan

SOUTH-EAST WALES:

- 29. Cardiff West
- 30. Cardiff North
- 31. Cardiff Central
- 32. Cardiff South and Penarth
- 33. Merthyr and Rhymney
- 34. Blaenau Gwent
- 35. Torfaen
- 36. Monmouth
- 37. Caerphilly
- 38. Islwyn
- 39. Newport West
- 40. Newport East

WHAT SUPPORT CAN WELSH YOUTH PARLIAMENT MEMBERS EXPECT FROM THE SENEDD?

The Senedd will support all Welsh Youth Parliament Members in the following ways.

- Welsh Youth Parliament Members will be allocated a member of staff from the Senedd during their time at the Welsh Youth Parliament. This member of staff will provide support and guidance, and will be a contact point for any help or advice about the Welsh Youth Parliament. They will also give Welsh Youth Parliament Members regular updates and provide information about upcoming meetings and events.
- The Senedd will provide information for the parents or guardians of Welsh Youth Parliament Members about their role in the Welsh Youth Parliament.
- The Senedd will provide support and information for schools and youth organisations about their role in the Welsh Youth Parliament.
- The Senedd will cover any reasonable costs Welsh Youth Parliament Members incur related to their work with the Welsh Youth Parliament, such as:
 - Authorised travel;
 - Accommodation;
 - Food;
 - The cost of attending activities arranged by the Senedd.

- The Senedd will provide transport options for Welsh Youth Parliament events arranged by the Senedd.
- The Senedd will provide relevant and useful training on what the role of the Senedd is.
- The Senedd will provide clear guidance and training on policies which all Welsh Youth Parliament Members will need to follow, including: social media, equal opportunities, child protection and safeguarding. These will be found in a handbook provided to all elected Members.
- Welsh Youth Parliament Members will receive full training and guidance on any work they are asked to undertake for the Welsh Youth Parliament; this could include research training, public speaking, debating skills, using social media, safeguarding and more.
- The Senedd will provide support to Welsh Youth Parliament Members for their own personal development and development of their role in the Welsh Youth Parliament to help them do the best they can.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF BEING A WELSH YOUTH PARLIAMENT MEMBER

Being a Welsh Youth Parliament Member is a fantastic opportunity for young people aged 11 and up to 18 all over Wales.

“We’ve had the chance to meet with people that we never would have otherwise. We’ve spoken to Members of the Senedd and Ministers about issues affecting young people and most importantly represented young people on a national level.”

Evan Burgess

Welsh Youth Parliament Member, 2018-2021

The Senedd will expect all Welsh Youth Parliament Members to follow and uphold the ‘Rules’ which is the WYP Code of Conduct. If Welsh Youth Parliament Members are alleged to have breached the Code of Conduct, there will be a fair investigation into their behaviour and any allegations made before deciding on any further action.

A detailed version of the ‘Rules’ will be issued to all Welsh Youth Parliament Members once elected.

Welsh Youth Parliament Members will be responsible for:

- Attending all official Welsh Youth Parliament meetings;
- Communicating with Senedd staff regarding meeting arrangements and attendance.
- Reporting any concerns or issues to appropriate staff members;
- Keeping Senedd staff updated about any changes to personal information and circumstances;

- Respecting the Welsh Language;
- Using social media appropriately and within the Senedd's guidelines;
- Respecting the political impartiality of the Welsh Youth Parliament;
- Treating people with dignity and respect, particularly those who may be from a vulnerable or protected groups on account of their race, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, disability or religion/belief. This includes fellow WYPMs, Senedd staff and any external groups/individuals you come into contact with;
- Abiding by the law at all times and not carrying out any unlawful activities whilst participating in Welsh Youth Parliament business;
- Behaving in a way which does not bring the Senedd into disrepute.



WHAT COMMITMENT IS EXPECTED FROM A WELSH YOUTH PARLIAMENT MEMBER?

Welsh Youth Parliament Members will be expected to take part in Welsh Youth Parliament activities for the duration of the two year term.

All 60 Welsh Youth Parliament Members will meet as a whole group, usually in the Senedd, three times during their two-year term.

Members will also meet in their regional areas as well as virtual meetings where possible. Their work will include meeting with and discussing issues with other Welsh Youth Parliament Members and consulting with the young people they represent on the issues raised. Every effort will be made to arrange meetings and events at times and dates that will enable as many Welsh Youth Parliament Members as possible to attend.

WHO CAN STAND AS A CANDIDATE IN THE ELECTION?

Any young person living in or receiving their education in Wales can nominate themselves as a candidate for one of the 40 constituency seats. However, they will need to be at least 11 years old, and be no older than 17 years old on the last day of the election (22 November 2021).

Young people who are eligible to stand at the election can stand as a candidate for one of the 40 constituency seats. If a young person wishing to stand for election receives their education in a different electoral constituency to their home address, they can choose which constituency they wish to stand for. It's possible to check your constituency by going to [senedd.wales/find-a-member-of-the-senedd](https://www.senedd.wales/find-a-member-of-the-senedd).

A young person can also be returned as a representative by an official partner organisation. It is possible for a young person to stand as a candidate for election in their constituency and for a partner organisation at the same time. If a young person gains the most amount of votes for one of the 40 constituency seats, and is the preferred candidate returned by an official partner organisation, the choice will lie with the young person as to which seat they choose to occupy. The relinquished seat will either be allocated to the young person who obtained the second highest number of votes in that constituency, or to the official partner organisation who will then return another young person.

To stand for the constituency seat, the young person will need to complete an application form at www.youthparliament.wales. Applications open on the 05 July 2021 and close on the 20 September 2021.

The form will take about 15 minutes to complete. Candidates must read the introduction, complete the relevant check boxes which state that they confirm the information they have provided is accurate, that they will comply with the election rules and parental consent will also be needed to complete the form.

Young people will need to provide the following information to apply:

- Name;
- Address and post code;
- Email Address;
- Date of birth;
- Equality form.

Candidates will need to provide a short biography about themselves. This should be no longer than 200 words. It should cover why they would be a good Welsh Youth Parliament Member and the three issues that are most important to them. The issues need to be things that the Senedd has powers over such as health, Welsh language, youth provisions, the environment etc. More information about the Senedd's powers can be found on the Senedd's website

<https://senedd.wales/how-we-work/our-role/powers>.

Once young people have successfully completed their online application form and their information has been verified, they will then be sent an Information Pack. This will tell them everything they need to know about standing for election to the Welsh Youth Parliament.

The remaining 20 seats will be returned by partner organisations.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

20 of the 60 Welsh Youth Parliament Members will be returned by partner organisations to ensure the representation of diverse groups of young people.

Any organisation, of any size, from any part of Wales can apply to become a partner organisation.

“The experience has had a big impact on our representatives and their futures. They have so much to take away in the form of knowledge, skills, experience, awareness. How many young people can say they stood up in parliament or attended ministerial meetings and debated in the chamber? It really is an incredible opportunity which will support their education/career paths going forward.”

Learning Disability Wales

Welsh Youth Parliament Partner Organisation, 2018-2021

Organisations wanting to become an official Welsh Youth Parliament partner will need to apply in writing by the 28 June 2021, and will be considered against a set criteria.

Guidance on becoming a Welsh Youth Parliament partner organisation and an application form can be found at www.youthparliament.wales

VOTING IN WELSH YOUTH PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS

All young people between 11 and up to the age of 18 years old, living or receiving their education in Wales are eligible to vote in Welsh Youth Parliament elections but they must register to vote beforehand.

Voter registration will be open from 31 May – 12 November 2021. Young people will be able to register to vote at www.youthparliament.wales.

Those who registered to vote in the 2018 Welsh Youth Parliament election do not need to register again, They will be sent an e-mail on 03 June to inform them that they are still registered. Their voting code and instructions will be e-mailed on 01 November

Registering to vote will only take a few minutes, the following information will be needed to register:

- Name;
- Post code (home or school);
- Email address;
- Date of birth.

Once the online registration has been completed an e-mail confirmation will be sent asking the young person to confirm the details and validate their registration. If this doesn't show up in your inbox please check your Junk mail.

Voting for the election will open on 01 November and will close at 12pm on 22 November 2021.

Those who have registered to vote by 29 October will be e-mailed a voting code and instructions on 01 November. Those registering to vote between 29 October and 12 November will receive their voting code on 15 November.

Young people who have registered to vote will need their voting code when casting their vote. This is to ensure everyone who has registered has only one opportunity to cast their vote for their favoured candidate.

Biographies for all the candidates for each constituency will be available at www.youthparliament.wales from 18 October – 22 November 2021.

HOW CAN SCHOOLS AND YOUTH ORGANISATIONS SUPPORT AND PROMOTE THE WELSH YOUTH PARLIAMENT ELECTION

The basis for the Welsh Youth Parliament can be found in article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

This sets out the right of children and young people to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account when decisions are being made on any matter that affects them.

This also underpins the key principles of youth work in Wales and is clearly reflected in the New Curriculum for Wales which aims to develop young people as ethically informed citizens of Wales and the world. As a result, supporting and promoting the WYP is relevant, and provides unique experiences for young people to get involved, be that in the classroom, at home or as part of a youth organisation.

“Being part of the Welsh Youth Parliament has really helped my own personal development but also spurred my friends and young people I know to take an interest in politics.”

Talulah Thomas

Welsh Youth Parliament Member, 2018-2021

To encourage as many young people as possible to get involved in the work of the WYP the Senedd’s Education and Youth Engagement team welcome the support of schools, colleges and youth organisations across Wales.

Our hope is that young people of different ages, genders, socio - economic backgrounds, abilities and ethnicities, from all parts of Wales will in some way participate in the work of the WYP. Either by registering to vote, by standing for election, by voting during the election, or by contributing to the work of the WYP on issues that are important to them.

The Senedd's Education and Youth Engagement Team have developed a range of resources, workshops for young people, and training sessions for professionals to support the work of promoting the WYP election. Full details of the resources and booking information for the workshops and training sessions can be found at www.youthparliament.wales or e-mail hello@youthparliament.wales for further information.

There are many practical ways which schools, colleges and youth organisations can support the WYP :

- Register to receive a Welsh Youth Parliament Election Marketing Pack
- Use our WYP session plans or book a workshop as part of citizenship themed assembly or lessons to raise awareness about the work of the Senedd and WYP;
- Use WYP session plans or book a workshop as part of a youth organisation activity;
- Book a peer to peer training session for members of your school council or youth forum;
- Promote the Welsh Youth Parliament on social media or in newsletters and on websites;
- Encourage young people to register to vote in Welsh Youth Parliament elections, allow time during registration, relevant lessons or club activity for 11 up to 18 year olds to register to vote;
- Encourage debates and discussions led by young people on issues which are important to them and feed into the WYP Key Issues Consultation;
- Encourage young people to stand for election to become a Welsh Youth Parliament Member and offer support to the young people during the application process;

- Support young people standing for election during the 3-week election period by helping them raise awareness amongst other young people in either a school or youth organisation setting;
- Allow time within lessons, registration period or youth club activity for young people to read about the candidates and to vote;
- Share information about the Welsh Youth Parliament within your own networks;
- Encourage young people to attend events organised by the Welsh Youth Parliament;
- Following the election take part in WYP consultation events and activities to raise awareness on issues which have been selected by young people.

YOUR
VOICE.

YOUR
CHOICE.

YOUR
FUTURE.



WEBSITE: **WWW.YOUTHPARLIAMENT.WALES**

INSTAGRAM: **WELSHYOUTHPARLIAMENT**

FACEBOOK: **WELSHYOUTHPARLIAMENT**

TWITTER: **WELSHYOUTHPARL**