Consent for your child to take part in the Welsh Government consultation on removing the defence of ‘reasonable punishment.’

**March 2018**

**What is the consultation about?**

It’s currently against the law to hit a child except when this is seen as a ‘reasonable punishment’. Removing the defence of ‘reasonable punishment’ would make it clear that physically punishing children isn’t acceptable in Wales. The Welsh Government is carrying out a public consultation to understand how people feel about legislation that prevents the physical punishment of children and young people.

The Welsh Government have asked Unicef UK to help them collect the views of children and young people in our Rights Respecting Schools and to feedback their views.

**How is Unicef carrying out the consultation?**

Unicef is working in partnership with Votes for Schools to develop a lessonfor teachers to use, to allow children to be informed about the issue and then vote on questions from the consultation.

In some schools Unicef will also be facilitating focus group discussions outside of the classroom (with a teacher they know and trust) where children will be asked to share their opinions on physical punishment.

The discussions will not ask children to talk about their own experiences; rather the questions will encourage children to talk generally about physical punishment and share their views. However, if a child shares something that causes concern about their own personal experiences, the teacher present will follow their school safeguarding procedures.

**Informed consent**

Before the lesson or activity takes place the teacher will explain the consultation to the children so they know what the discussion will be about. No child will have to take part in this activity unless they wish to do so.

**What next?**

Following these consultations, Unicef will be summarising children’s views to share with the children and young people taking part and to submit to the Welsh Government. These will be available via your child’s school.

We will not include the names of children or schools who take part.

**If for any reason you do not wish your child to take part in this consultation please inform the headteacher.**

**Thank you**