

Children and Young People Committee

Meeting Venue:
Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date:
13 March 2013

Meeting time:
09:00

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



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Agenda

Pre-meeting (09.00–09.15)

1. Introductions, apologies and substitutions

2. Inquiry into Attendance and Behaviour: evidence session (09.15–10.15) (Pages 1 – 18)

Professor David Egan, Education Adviser and Consultant

Break (10.15–10.30)

3. Inquiry into Attendance and Behaviour: evidence session (10.30–11.30) (Pages 19 – 22)

Hugh Patrick, Vice Chair, Governors Wales

Mike Barker, Development Officer, Governors Wales

4. Inquiry into Attendance and Behaviour: scrutiny session (11.30–12.30) (Pages 23 – 44)

Leighton Andrews AM, Minister for Education and Skills

Ruth Conway, Head of Pupil Wellbeing Branch

Kara Richards, Senior Implementation Officer, Behaviour and Attendance

5. Papers to note (Pages 45 – 56)

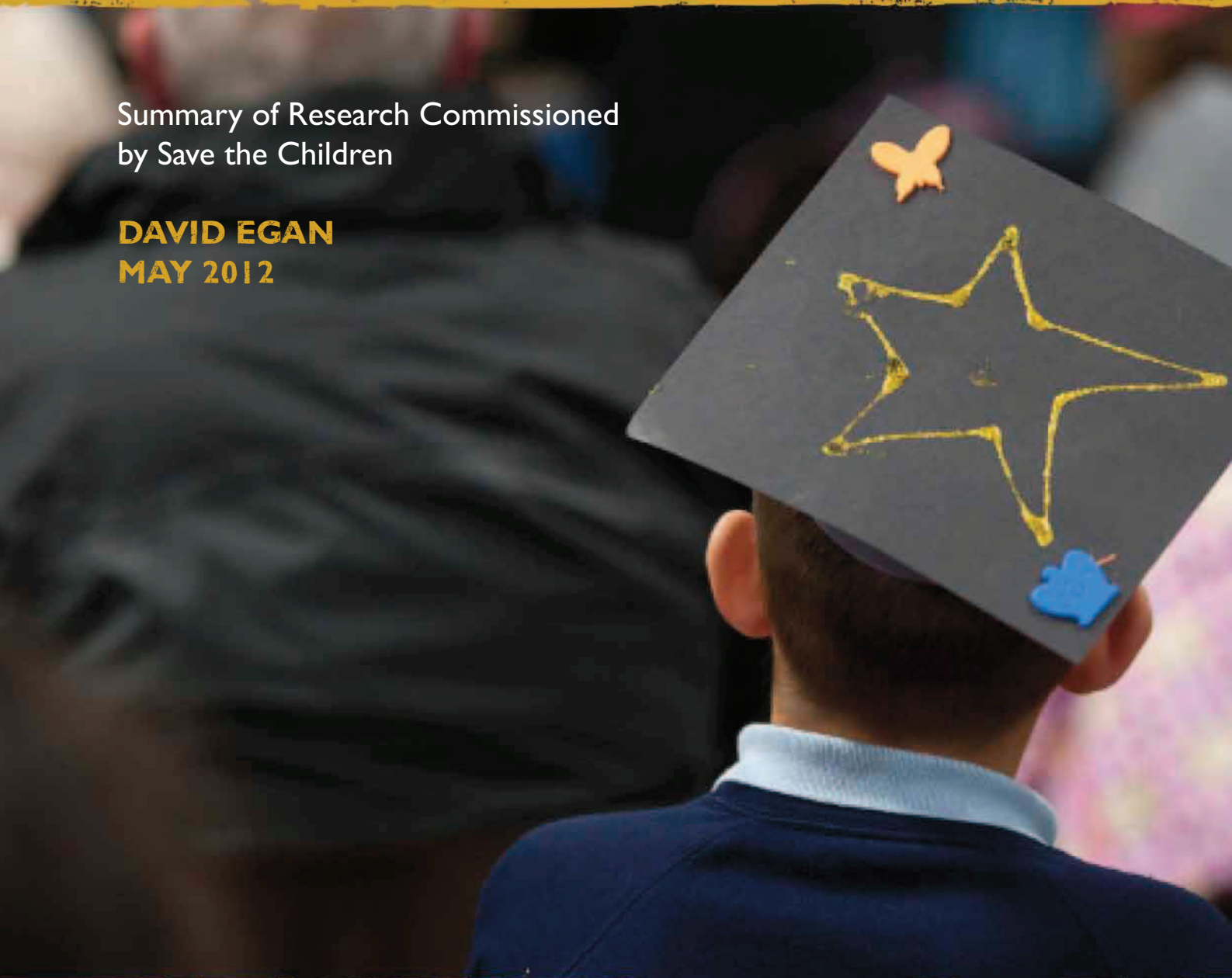
6. Motion under Standing Order 17.42(vi) to exclude the public from the meeting on 21 March

COMMUNITIES, FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS TOGETHER:

A ROUTE TO REDUCING THE IMPACT OF POVERTY ON
EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT IN SCHOOLS ACROSS WALES

Summary of Research Commissioned
by Save the Children

DAVID EGAN
MAY 2012



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Professor David Egan is an Educational Consultant and Adviser. He has been closely involved in education in Wales as a schoolteacher, academic, researcher and policymaker for many years. Currently his major portfolio of interests include acting as a Senior Consultant to the ASPIRE Programme and as Policy Adviser to the Heads of the Valleys Education Programme.

SAVE THE CHILDREN

In Wales today over 200,000 children live in poverty. Growing up in poverty has a huge impact on a child's health, education and economic future - their opportunities and life chances. To build a society of opportunity and social mobility we must fight inequality. Only by prioritising the ending of educational underachievement of children in poverty and boosting families' incomes can progress be made towards a prosperous Wales.

Save the Children is working with families, children and young people across Wales to bring about the changes needed to end child poverty.

Introduction

In Wales there is a very strong and growing association between poverty and low levels of educational achievement.

This is a major influence upon current levels of education performance in Wales.

The Welsh Government has, therefore, made reducing the 'poverty gap' one of three national priorities for schools in Wales and introduced significant grant funding to support this.

Within this context, this report considers the extent and causes of the 'poverty gap' in educational achievement in Wales and the solutions which should now be applied by schools, local authorities and the Welsh Government to address this situation.

The Problem

Poverty is a major influence on the extent to which children in Wales can achieve their potential.

The gap between the achievement of disadvantaged compared to advantaged children is present at 9 months old, is significant by the age of 3, grows in the primary years and accelerates particularly in secondary education.

By the time that students complete their 'compulsory' education at the age of fifteen the gap is at its biggest: it is two and a half times more likely that a student not living in poverty will achieve a high outcome than one living in poverty.

There is a very low chance that disadvantaged students who have not achieved to a high level at the age of 15 will go into further and higher education and achieve any further qualifications by the age of 19.

Whilst those students living and not living in poverty have improved their educational performance over time, the poverty gap has not narrowed.

Large concentrations of FSM students in a school have an adverse effect on the performance of non-FSM students: the evidence is less clear on a possible obverse effect.

Causes

Poverty and child poverty which affects one in three of all children in Wales is the major cause of low achievement in disadvantaged students.

Low educational achievement is a major cause of poverty and poverty the most important reason for low educational achievement.

Poverty is concentrated in particular areas and schools in Wales most of which faced the collapse of their local economies and sources of employment in the 1980s, but there is not a consistent correlation between high concentrations of poverty and school performance.

The reason why the low performance of FSM students accelerates in secondary schools is likely to be caused mainly by personal and social factors.

In disadvantaged communities parents, peer groups and communities generally do not have the positive influence they could on the achievement of students.

The reasons why schools are not able to improve the achievement of disadvantaged students can be identified.

Solutions

The solution to reducing the poverty gap in education in Wales must involve holistic action that includes schools, parents and the community.

Schools can have a significant effect in improving the achievement of disadvantaged students. To bring this about they need to:

- Have strong moral purpose.
- Leadership that focuses the activities of the school on this purpose.
- Place a strong focus on the wellbeing of students.
- Use data to track students and prompt early interventions.
- Provide high quality teaching.

Some schools and local authorities achieve this already, but most have limited success and there is considerable variation in performance.

Schools cannot maximize the reduction of the poverty gap unless their work is supported by strong engagement with their parents and communities.

Parental engagement can have a significant impact on reducing the poverty gap, but it is unlikely that there is sufficient high quality parental engagement in place in Wales.

Significant opportunities exist to improve the links between schools and communities in the most disadvantaged parts of Wales through closer working with *Flying Start*, *Families First*, *Communities First* and *Community Focused Schools*.

The national priority in education to reduce the poverty gap along with the extension of *Flying Start*, the introduction of *Families First* and the further development of *Communities First* provide a unique opportunity to develop a holistic approach within the Welsh Government's *Tackling Poverty Strategy* that can provide the solution that is required to significantly reduce the impact of poverty on education.

This will require partnership working at national, regional and local level.

Conclusions

Poverty has a significant impact on education and although there are instances which show this is not an inevitable outcome, in general the poverty gap in education is not being narrowed and is a major cause of low performance by the education system in Wales.

Whilst the influence of parents, peer groups, communities and schools all affect why disadvantaged students do not do well in education, the biggest impact is that of poverty itself and this is concentrated in particular communities and schools in Wales.

Solutions for reducing the poverty gap in education can be found in holistic and mutually reinforcing approaches that unite schools, parents and communities; an opportunity now exists in Wales to bring these approaches together in a national programme within the Welsh Government's *Tackling Poverty Strategy*.

Recommendations

The Welsh Government should;

- Develop within the *Tackling Poverty Strategy* a national intervention model to reduce the impact of poverty on educational achievement;
- Provide clear guidance for schools and local authorities on how best to use the funding that is being made available
- Remit Estyn and the Wales Audit Office to monitor and regularly report on the effective use of this funding.

Schools should;

- Have a strategic plan in place that shows how they will use the resources available to them to reduce the poverty gap in student achievement;
- Develop leadership structures that enable this to be achieved
- Regularly monitor, report and evaluate the impact the plan is having on student outcomes.

Local Authority Education Consortia should;

- In the support and challenge work they undertake with their schools have as one of their major priorities reducing the poverty gap in education
- Ensure that they have the leadership and staff capacity in place to achieve this.

About us

Save the Children works in more than 120 countries.

We save children's lives.

We fight for their Rights.

We help them fulfil their potential.

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POVERTY AND LOW EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT IN WALES: STUDENT, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INTERVENTIONS

David Egan

The Welsh Government is committed to reducing poverty and its effects, including the educational gap between children in low-income families and their better-off peers. This *Viewpoint* draws on recent evidence assembled by JRF to consider how student-, family- and community-focused interventions can best contribute to breaking the link between poverty and low educational achievement in Wales.

FEBRUARY 2013

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Background

On average about 17 per cent of Welsh children live in relative poverty, using the percentage of children receiving free school meals (FSM) as an indicator. The educational performance of these children compared with those who come from more prosperous backgrounds provides clear evidence of the effect of poverty on educational achievement, a major issue for the Welsh Government.

Studies have found that under-achievement in children in Wales receiving FSM may be a significant problem from nursery class onwards. Of particular concern is the gap between the educational achievement at age 15 of students in receipt of FSM and those who are not, as measured by performance in GCSE examinations.

In fact there has always been a 'long-tail' of achievement in the education system in Wales. When in the past relatively low-skilled employment was plentiful in the coal, metal and manufacturing industries this might have been acceptable. In the current challenging economic environment this can no longer be the case.

As part of its Action Plan to improve educational performance, the Welsh Government has decided that reducing the impact of poverty on what children achieve in school is one of its three main priorities. The other two – improving standards of literacy and numeracy – are seen as being closely related to the priority on poverty (Andrews, 2011a and b).

Given this background, it is crucially important for the Welsh Government and the education system in Wales to decide what now needs to be done to improve the educational performance of children living in poverty in Wales.

Key points

- There is strong evidence that living in poverty has a major impact on levels of educational achievement for children in Wales. This is particularly troubling at a time of recession, when there is an increasing emphasis on educational outcomes, and when academic attainments at age 15 have become critical for entrance into the job market and further and higher education.
- Policy outlined in the Welsh Government's Tackling Poverty Action Plan and its Guidance for schools on the implementation of the Pupil Deprivation Grant has two main strategies for reducing poverty's impact on educational achievement: learning- and teaching-focused interventions on the one hand, and student-, family- and community-focused interventions on the other.
- Although some of these approaches, which include schemes to improve parenting and students' wellbeing, as well as extra-curricular and mentorship programmes, show benefits, there is no good evidence base for their impact on educational outcomes, as measured by academic attainment.
- Until recently, more research had been carried out on learning- and teaching-focused interventions (which address issues of teaching and leadership) than on student-, family- and community-focused interventions (characterised as 'AAB-type' strategies because they focus on the aspirations, attitudes and behaviours of disadvantaged children and their families).
- This *Viewpoint* recommends that future policy initiatives in the Welsh education system should combine both approaches, with a particular emphasis on programmes that focus on parental involvement, extra-curricular activities and mentoring.
- Whilst recent JRF studies show that some AAB-type interventions may contribute to improvements in educational achievement for children in poverty in Wales, they also show that there is still a need for more robust and detailed evidence on their impact, especially for Wales-specific programmes. Pre-trialling and evaluation should precede any future interventions in this area.

The link between poverty and low educational achievement

Living in poverty has a major impact upon levels of educational achievement in Wales. The most widely-used indicator of the number of children who live in relative poverty in Wales is the percentage receiving free school meals (FSM). On average this is about 17 per cent of children in Wales.

The educational performance of these children compared with those who come from more prosperous backgrounds, provides clear evidence of the effect of poverty on achievement.

Educational under-achievement by children living in poverty in Wales can be seen as early as the age of three, when they enter nursery. Here the scores in standardised tests for those on FSM can be up to a year behind those of children not receiving FSM. This gap is often closed in the early years of primary education, but it widens again by the age of eleven.

At ages 14 and 15/16, standardised tests and examination results reveal that on average there is a gap of 32 to 34 per cent between what children living in poverty achieve compared with other children (Egan, 2012b; Estyn, 2010).

The percentage of 15 year olds achieve the equivalent of five or more higher-grade GCSEs, including English (or Welsh) and Mathematics is increasingly regarded as a key indicator of educational attainment. This is because having literacy and numeracy skills at this level is critically important for progression to further study and into employment. Here, too, there is a significant gap in achievement. In 2011, for example, 21 per cent of young people receiving FSM in Wales achieved this outcome compared with 55 per cent not receiving FSM.

Findings for 15 year olds in Wales participating in the OECD's (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) PISA programme (Programme for International Assessment) point to broadly similar trends (Bradshaw *et al.*, 2007 and 2010).

Welsh Government current policy

Faced by the high levels of poverty and child poverty that are being experienced in Wales (Parekh and Kenway, 2011) the Welsh Government is strongly committed to reducing the extent of poverty and its impact on families and children. To this end it has developed a Tackling Poverty Action Plan (Welsh Government, 2012b), setting out how it intends to help people currently facing poverty, both to mitigate its effects and to prevent future poverty. This work has been praised by the

Economic and Social Research Council as a model of the type of broad strategy required to address child poverty in the United Kingdom (ESRC, 2011).

In 2011 a Pupil Deprivation Grant was introduced, providing per-head funding to schools for each child over the age of five who receives free school meals. It will be provided up to 2014, and is intended to support schools in introducing additional interventions to improve the achievement of disadvantaged children. Guidance has been provided for schools on how best to use this grant (Welsh Government, 2012a).

This Guidance and the Action Plan focus on two types of strategy for reducing poverty's impact on educational achievement. The first can be described as learning- and teaching-focused, and the second as student-, family- and community-focused.

Learning- and teaching-focused policies are designed to improve the quality of teaching and leadership, seeing these as the most important influences on student achievement in all schools, including schools with relatively high numbers of FSM students. These policies draw upon a large body of research and practice on what leads to improvements in classrooms and schools and how schools can become highly effective (Egan, 2012a). They also draw on recent research on the most effective methods of learning and teaching for helping improve the outcomes of disadvantaged children (Sutton Trust, 2011).

Until recently far less research has been done on student-, family- and community-focused interventions. As reported below, recent JRF studies have characterised some of these as 'AAB' approaches – seeking to impact positively on the aspirations, attitudes and behaviours of disadvantaged children and their families.

At family and community level, the main Welsh Government policies that seek to reduce poverty and its effects have been the pre-school programme Flying Start, the families programme Families First (previously Cymorth) and the community-based programme Communities First (Egan, 2012b). These programmes have incorporated many examples of AAB-type approaches, including parenting strategies and attempts to raise the aspirations and change the attitudes of children, their families and communities.

The Welsh Government's education department has also developed a wide range of AAB-type initiatives (Egan, 2007). These include: Reaching Higher and First Campus, designed to encourage disadvantaged young people to aspire to higher education; the extensively funded RAISE programme (Raising Attainment and Educational Standards in Education, 2006–10), targeted at the most disadvantaged schools; Learning Coach, providing mentoring support for 14 to 19 year olds; and the

Community Focused Schools programme, which aims to encourage schools to provide or become the location for extra-curricular activities.

In addition to these, funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) has been used to support similar interventions in some of the most disadvantaged communities of Wales, with a focus on raising aspirations, improving attitudes and wellbeing, developing basic skills and extending curriculum activities. Examples are the PREVENT and Building the Future Together programmes, targeted at disengaged young people in the post-industrial South Wales Valleys.

Improving student wellbeing has been a focus for many of these interventions, including RAISE, those funded by the European Social Fund and a range of the Welsh Government education department's programmes, with policies designed to improve student behaviour, inclusion, self-esteem, emotional intelligence and more general social and personal skills (Welsh Government, 2011).

There have also been increasing efforts in Wales to develop the involvement and engagement of parents and families in their children's education (Egan, 2012b). Families First and Communities First have promoted such approaches and many schools and local authorities have undertaken similar work, including family learning programmes. Save the Children has introduced its FAST (Families and Schools Together) programme into a number of areas in Wales, working with targeted schools to improve the engagement in education of groups of disadvantaged children and families.

Within these various policy areas and associated interventions emphasis has been placed on providing mentoring support for students, and enriching their experiences through extra-curricular activities, in the belief that these are not available to disadvantaged young people as they are to their more privileged peers. For example, mentoring support has been offered through the Learner Coach initiative and First Campus, with the objective of encouraging young people to progress through 14–19 education and proceed into higher education. Extra-curricular opportunities have been provided through the Community Focused Schools programme, from RAISE funding and through local initiatives such as the E3 programme in Rhondda Cynon Taff. Many of these interventions have been supported through European Social Fund funding and have been targeted at NEETs reduction (helping those not in education, employment or training).

What evidence is there for the impact of these various student-, family- and community-focused interventions in Wales? In many cases they can be seen to have led to improvements in the participation and engagement of young people in education and training. However, evidence on the extent to which these

interventions lead to measurable improvements in the achievement of children and young people living in poverty is more limited and generally far less positive.

Independent evaluations of the RAISE, Cymorth and Communities First programmes all point to strengths and weaknesses in the AAB-type educational interventions undertaken, but these do not include evidence of improved educational outcomes. Ongoing evaluations of the Flying Start programme point to variable impacts upon parents of parenting and language-and-play interventions. An important evaluation on the impact of Flying Start on the levels of achievement of three year olds on entering school is due for publication in the near future (Egan, 2012b).

Her Majesty's Inspectorate in Wales has recently reported on family learning programmes funded by the Welsh Government and generally targeted at the parents of early years children (Estyn, 2012). Whilst it found much of interest and value in these programmes, it also noted very little tracking of the impact they have on standards achieved by children.

The work of FAST in Wales has also been evaluated. Whilst this showed qualitative improvements in the behaviour and attitudes of the children and families involved in the programme, evidence on any impact upon the children's achievement was not identified (McDonald and Fitzroy, 2010).

It can be concluded, therefore, that whilst student-, family- and community-focused approaches to reducing the impact of poverty on education in Wales may have merit for improving student wellbeing and the participation of disadvantaged children and their families in education, there is limited evidence of their impact on improving achievement. Part of the problem is a lack of robust evidence on impact drawn from rigorous research and evaluation, including evidence on the scale of effectiveness of different interventions.

Recent Joseph Rowntree Foundation research

It is, therefore, timely that over the last two years JRF has produced a number of studies about the impact of AAB-type interventions – raising aspirations, changing attitudes to schooling and tackling behaviour – on the educational outcomes of disadvantaged children (Kintrea *et al.*, 2011; Cummings *et al.*, 2012; Gorard *et al.*, 2012 and Carter-Wall and Whitfield, 2012). These include pre-school parenting programmes, attempts to raise the aspirations of secondary school children, extra-curricular activities, mentoring, improving behaviour, reducing truancy and a range of initiatives designed to improve student wellbeing.

What the JRF research has shown is that whilst there is an overall problem in the quantity and quality of robust research evidence that is available on these interventions, there are also doubts about 'whether the initiatives introduced so far have actually been successful in improving outcomes' (Carter-Wall and Whitfield, 2012: p.3).

This emphasis on 'outcomes' demands evidence of actual improvements in the educational achievement of poorer children, though of course these interventions may have other impacts and may be important in their own right. Nonetheless, given the current emphasis in education policy on improving what these young people achieve in terms of literacy, numeracy and other skills and qualifications and the need in difficult economic times to achieve value for money, the significant lack of evidence of improvements being made in these areas is a cause for concern.

Whilst this research challenges the widespread assumptions of policy-makers and practitioners that AAB-type interventions will automatically lead to improvements in educational standards, it does point to two areas where the evidence is much more positive. These are:

- parental involvement in education;
- participation in extra-curricular activities and mentoring.

Parental involvement

JRF research has found that there was a reasonable case to be made for parental (family) involvement in their children's education having 'a causal influence on children's school readiness and subsequent attainment' (Carter-Wall and Whitfield, 2012: p.5), compared with all the other interventions it reviewed.

This research points to four areas of parental involvement which have had success:

- improving at-home parenting;
- involving parents in school;
- engaging parents in their children's learning and in their own learning;
- aligning school-home expectations.

Whilst the research identifies the key features of successful interventions in these areas, it could not isolate which of these, singly or in combination, actually led to improved educational outcomes for young people. They suggest, however, that providing parents with better information and access to appropriate support and advice appears to have the greatest effect. This enables them to conclude that interventions that simply raise parents' aspirations for their children to succeed are likely to be unsuccessful, whereas those which 'enable and encourage parents

actively to engage with their child's learning and the education system more generally' are usually successful (Carter-Wall and Whitfield, 2012: p.6).

Extra-curricular activities and mentoring

Whilst recognising that robust evidence for the impact of extra-curricular activities and mentoring on students' achievements is lacking, the JRF research suggests that these kinds of intervention offer much promise.

Part of the difficulty in judging the effectiveness of extra-curricular interventions is that many of them have been targeted at reducing truancy and bad behaviour, with the implicit assumption that this would lead to improved outcomes. In the main, these approaches have either turned out to be ineffective or the evaluations undertaken did not include attempts to judge if they led to improved educational outcomes.

JRF research pointed to practices which led to successful mentoring of young people. Whilst there is some evidence that this results in improved achievement, explanations of how or why the improvement occurred are not apparent in the evaluations carried out.

The JRF studies propose that if AAB-type strategies are to be cost-effective in future, then carefully designed and robustly evaluated funding should be concentrated on parental involvement, extra-curricular provision and mentoring. However, they do not preclude other innovative approaches. What they argue is that such interventions should have a strong evidence base, with in-built robust evaluations of student achievement, and that they should be trialled at a small-scale level before a decision is taken on whether they should be scaled up.

Conclusions

- In developing its work on how education can contribute to reducing the impact of poverty on educational achievement, the education system in Wales should combine learning- and teaching-focused and student-, family- and community-focused policies.
- Student, family and community approaches should focus on parental involvement, extra-curricular activities and mentoring as being the most cost-effective and having the best evidence base.
- The evidence base for interventions in these areas, especially in Wales-specific programmes, needs to be strengthened, as currently there is little robust evidence on impact.

- Interventions focused on parental involvement, extra-curricular activities and mentoring should be prioritised within the Flying Start, Families First and Communities First programmes. They should also be prioritised in any future initiatives, including ESF-funded projects. Future spending by schools of the Pupil Deprivation Grant should prioritise these interventions as well as those which are learning- and teaching-focused. These priority areas should also be reflected in the strategies in the Welsh Government's Tackling Poverty Action Plan.
- Any other interventions to be used in Wales in future (including any funded by the ESF) should be pre-trialled and rigorously evaluated before a decision is taken on wider implementation. The main criterion for deciding on scaling up such approaches should be the impact on improved educational achievement by poorer children.

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About this paper

This paper has considered the findings of important research published by JRF on how certain types of intervention have the potential to contribute to improving the achievement of disadvantaged children in education. These interventions attempt to impact upon the aspirations, attitudes and behaviour (AAB) of disadvantaged children and their families.

JRF research has found that there are difficulties with identifying robust evidence on how far these types of intervention lead to improvements in achievement. Evidence is strongest for those approaches focused on parental involvement, extra-curricular activities and mentoring.

The paper has related these findings to the current situation in Wales, where there is a very strong focus on reducing the impact of poverty on educational achievement. It recommends that JRF findings on AAB interventions should be factored into how the education system in Wales takes forward its work in this important area.

About the author

David Egan is Emeritus Professor of Education at Cardiff Metropolitan University and a Visiting Professor at the University of Glamorgan. He is chair of the Welsh Government's Tackling Poverty External Advisory Group, but writes here in a personal capacity.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

This *Viewpoint* is part of JRF's research and development programme. The views are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the JRF.

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Promoting and developing high quality school governance

Inquiry into Attendance and Behaviour

- 1.0 Governors Wales promotes the effective governance of schools in Wales and provides support to individual governors, local governors associations, fora and other groupings. Governors Wales is committed to the promotion and effective management of quality provision in schools in Wales.
- 1.2 There are approximately 23,000 school governors in Wales. They give their time, skills and expertise in a voluntary capacity, to help their schools provide children with the best possible education.
- 1.3 Governors Wales recognises that governing bodies are accountable for the strategic direction of their school and for the quality of education provided.
- 1.4 Governors Wales' role, therefore is to support governors by:
 - Encouraging effective and efficient governance of schools;
 - Providing advice and guidance to governors and governing bodies;
 - Identifying their training needs;
 - Promoting their entitlement to training;
 - Identifying and disseminating best practice;
 - Raising their profile and status;
 - Helping governors to focus on the consequences of their work for children;
 - Representing the views, concerns and aspirations of governors to policy makers.
- 1.5 Governors Wales welcomes the opportunity to submit written evidence to the Children and Young People Committee inquiry into Attendance and Behaviour and to discuss further on 13th March 2013. Please find below general comments on some of the key areas:

2.0 Strategies and support in place to address behaviour and attendance

- 2.1 In accordance with Section 88 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006¹, governing bodies must ensure “that policies designed to promote good behaviour and discipline on the part of its pupils are pursued at the school”. In particular, it also requires governing bodies to:
 - “(a) ... make, and from time to time review, a written statement of general principles to which the head teacher is to have regard in determining any measures under section 89(1), and
 - (b) where they consider it desirable that any particular measures should be so determined by the head teacher or that he should have regard to any particular matters—
 - (i) shall notify him of those measures or matters, and
 - (ii) may give him such guidance as they consider appropriate.”

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents>

- 2.2 The governing body must have regard to Welsh Government guidance in carrying out these functions, and must consult with the headteacher, parents of registered pupils at the school, pupils, and “such other persons who work at the school (whether or not for payment)”², before making or revising the written statement of general principles.
- 2.3 The governing body must also ensure that the school has clear protocols and procedures in place for any exclusions. Governors must review certain fixed period exclusions and all permanent exclusions and may be expected to represent the school before an independent appeal panel.
- 2.4 It is essential therefore that governing bodies are clear about their responsibilities in these areas and should attend appropriate and relevant training. This is something that should be referenced in the mandatory training programme for governors, due to come into effect in September 2013.
- 2.5 The National Behaviour and Attendance Review (NBAR) report published in 2008 comments that “the governing body of a school should be actively engaged in the development of the school’s behaviour policy. It provides key voices for and within the community that help to set the climate of expectation as to what the school can achieve academically and what it contributes to the overall development of its pupils.”³
- 2.6 The report continues by emphasising the importance of “active engagement” of governing bodies in developing school behaviour policies but stresses that governors need to “know and understand the reasons why some pupils struggle to manage behaviour; ways in which schools can achieve change in pupils’ behaviour using their own resources; and ways in which schools can achieve change in pupils’ behaviour through the involvement of other agencies.”
- 2.7 Poor behaviour and non-attendance may be linked to challenges and circumstances that learners may be facing. Governing bodies need to be aware of any impact this may have for individual pupils or groups of pupils and their learning and how this can be addressed. Some governing bodies will have set up committees, e.g. Teaching and Learning or Curriculum Committees, to look at behaviour and attendance and review strategies etc., in greater detail.
- 2.8 In addition, some governing bodies may also have area link governors in place with specific responsibility for attendance and behaviour or for pupil participation. Link governors can play a significant role in not only developing the effectiveness of the governing body but in raising standards.
- 2.9 The NBAR report further recommends the publication of a guide for governors on key issues to support this particular role. Governors Wales would also endorse this. Governors always welcome having access to user friendly guidance on their roles and responsibilities which signpost key points and further information etc.
- 2.10 The guidance provided by Welsh Government on both attendance and behaviour (“Inclusion and Pupil Support”⁴ and “All Wales Attendance Framework”⁵) is very detailed and helpful. Whilst there is plenty of useful practice both at school, LA and Regional levels to promote high levels of attendance and good behaviour, we are mindful however, that sustained investment is continually

² The Education and Inspections Act 2006. Part 7, Chapter 1, Section 88 (3)

³ <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/reports/nbarreview/?lang=en> - Paragraph 6.3.1

⁴ <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/pupilsupport/inclusionpupilsupportguidance/?lang=en>

⁵ <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/pupilsupport/framework/?lang=en>

needed by Local Authorities / Regional Consortia in their Education Welfare Services to fully support schools to fulfil their roles effectively.

- 2.11 A properly funded professional Education Social Work Service, possibly integrated with Childrens' Services so that families may be helped as a whole, with the multiplicity of agencies would greatly assist school attendance. We recognise that this is a very complex area with different categories of problem but this needs a proper focus.
- 2.12 We are aware that schools / Local Authorities will often provide INSET training for staff on managing behaviour, sometimes involving governors. This is an effective way of ensuring that all are up-to-date with the latest strategies and information.
- 2.13 As the Guide to the Law for School Governors states “a school behaviour and attendance policy shapes the school ethos and makes a statement about how the school values and includes all the people in it”.⁶ Governors Wales believes that where policies are applied consistently, reviewed on a regular basis and clear, consistent expectations are outlined with regards to attendance and behaviour, that this has a positive impact on the school environment. Equally, where parental engagement is effective, this too will impact greatly on improving children and young people’s capacity to learn.
- 2.14 In addition, clear advice and guidance from the governing body, which feeds directly into the behaviour policy is essential. Governors need to ensure that they monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of attendance and behaviour policies, on a rolling basis.
- 2.15 Furthermore, governors should be familiar with their school’s agreed attendance targets and should monitor the progress the school is making towards it.
- 2.16 Governors need to ask key questions, in relation to strategies and intervention that the school uses to improve behaviour and attendance, examples include:
- a) Does the school have an up-to-date strategy for managing and improving behaviour that learners and staff understand and apply?
 - b) Does the governing body receive analysis information on behaviour and attendance, i.e. comparing authorised and unauthorised absences to both national and local data?
 - c) How is the impact of these interventions / strategies reviewed and measured?
- 2.17 When governors consider school performance data, they should look at the performance of all groups of learners, e.g. gender comparisons; performance of learners entitled to free school meals; ALN and attendance etc⁷. Governors should analyse, for example, how many pupils at their school have poor attendance, and if there is any relation to gender, entitlement to FSM etc. The school needs to clearly identify pupils and their achievements in the various aspects of the curriculum; this can then allow for specific support/mentoring for pupils at greatest risk of failure. For example, there is some evidence that secondary school breakfast clubs have improved punctuality and attendance and subsequently the attainment of those pupils entitled to free school meals.

⁶ <http://www.governorswales.org.uk/law/> - Paragraph 1, Chapter 15

⁷ Governor Guide on Using Performance Data

- 2.18 Curriculum and teaching and learning issues for pupils are very important in tackling behaviour and attendance concerns. Pupils who are performing well are less likely to be absent or misbehave. The balance of responses in relation to behaviour and attendance should be about pupils being successful and therefore being rewarded for their compliance.
- 2.19 If there is too much national and local emphasis on pupils' and schools' achievements at key academic benchmarks which, by definition, all learners may not be able to achieve; this could potentially distance some learners. The curriculum, particularly, but not only, at 14-19 needs to offer learners the opportunity to engage fully and to achieve their potential, via a variety of subject choices, both academic and vocational.
- 2.10 We are aware of anecdotal evidence that where there are well developed School Councils, where pupils feel their voice is taken seriously, and responded to, then pupil engagement with the school improves. In secondary schools, where this pupil voice is represented comprehensively at governors meetings through Associate Pupil Governors, the impact can be even stronger.

3.0 Collaborative working arrangements

- 3.1 There are schools / governing bodies where good practice is shared with school clusters and beyond. Estyn's website also provides useful case study material. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) will be the way forward to further develop, share and discuss effective behaviour and attendance strategies.
- 3.2 We recognise that collaboration between all agencies / stakeholders is crucial to provide sufficient levels of support to tackle attendance and behaviour issues. This however, needs to be resourced adequately to provide high quality, timely support and advice to schools / governing bodies as and when required.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 Lastly, whilst the above paper provides a general overview, to some extent, of the governing bodies responsibility in relation to attendance and behaviour, we hope that you will find this information of assistance. All stakeholders working together, with consistent support and intervention strategies resourced properly, along with effective whole school approaches, is crucial to improve overall school attendance and behaviour.

WRITTEN EVIDENCE TO THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOUR

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. This paper provides evidence to the Children and Young People Committee Inquiry into Attendance and Behaviour in advance of the Minister for Education and Skills' appearance before the Committee on 13 March 2013.
2. The paper sets out progress made to date and developments moving forward in relation to Welsh Government policies on attendance and behaviour since the publication of the National Behaviour and Attendance Review in 2008.

NATIONAL BEHAVIOUR AND ATTENDANCE REVIEW

The Behaving and Attending Action Plan 2009-2011

3. The National Behaviour and Attendance Review (NBAR) was undertaken by an independent group under the chairmanship of Professor Ken Reid. The review report contained 19 core recommendations and 73 supporting recommendations. The recommendations covered a very broad range of issues and the Welsh Government's response to the NBAR was set out in the Behaving and Attending Action Plan launched in 2009.
4. There were 45 actions in the Plan, to be delivered on a short, medium and long term basis. To date 30 of the actions have been completed, 10 are ongoing and 5 have evolved as a result wider policy developments. Key highlights to note are:
 - The development and publication of the All Wales Attendance Toolkit - a practical resource tool for use by the Education Welfare Service;
 - The development and publication of comprehensive anti-bullying, managed moves and nurture groups guidance documents for use by schools and local authorities;
 - The successful rollout of the School-based Counselling Strategy in secondary schools;
 - The publication of Behaviour Management Handbooks for primary and secondary schools.
5. Annex A sets out progress made against all the original actions set out in the Plan.

20 POINT ACTION PLAN TO RAISE SCHOOL STANDARDS

New Behaviour and Attendance Action Plan 2011-2013

6. There have been a number of major developments since NBAR and the launch of the original Action Plan. In February 2011 the Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning set out his 20 priorities for schools in Wales. This came in response to evidence from a number of sources on the underperformance of schools in Wales, including that contained in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results for 2009.
7. Attendance and behaviour formed part of the Minister's 20 priorities; specifically the need to revitalise and refocus the Welsh Government's approach to this policy area. Much of the original action plan had focussed on the development of good practice 'how to' guidance documents. Moving forward any new plan needed to focus on 'embedding and delivering' the recognised good practice. To this end the new Behaviour and Attendance Action plan targeted activity in three specific areas:
 - **Training and development** – Develop training modules on behaviour management and attendance; fund training in well evaluated behaviour management techniques; promote the use of restorative practices working with the Police through the All-Wales School Liaison Core Programme; develop a training, development and career framework for the Education Welfare Service in Wales.
 - **Standards and accountability** – Develop an Attendance and Behaviour Analysis Framework to ensure the robust use of attendance data; include attendance data as part of School Banding for Secondary Schools; introduce a national collection of data on exclusions at pupil and school level; hold an annual 'open and honest' meeting with local authorities to discuss performance on attendance, exclusions and pupils educated other than at school (EOTAS).
 - **Individual support and additional learning needs** – Use the information gathered through the behaviour and attendance pilots to inform future approaches to individual support; publish and implement an action plan on improving Education Other Than At School.

THE IMPACT OF THE NEW PLAN

8. Annex B provides more detailed progress against all the actions set out in the new Action Plan. In summary:

On Attendance

9. Banding for secondary schools was introduced in 2011. Banding uses information about examination performance and attendance data, looking at outcomes, progress and performance relative to socio-economic context, to group schools into one of five bands. Band 1 schools are performing and progressing well. Band 5 schools are those most in need of improvement.
10. In addition to the inclusion of attendance data in secondary school banding, much of the initial work on attendance has focussed on the development and introduction of an Attendance and Behaviour Analysis Framework. Its introduction was accompanied by considerable 'hands-on' support from Welsh Government officials. This involved officials using the framework to undertake extensive analysis of each local authority's attendance and behaviour data. A frank report on the findings of this analysis was produced which then formed the basis for a 'stocktake' with each separate authority. The 'stocktake' included discussion of the analysis, identification of performance issues, exploring reasons for underperformance as well as trying to identify examples of good practice and successful interventions. Feedback from local authorities to this support has been extremely positive.
11. The data in the 2011/12 absenteeism from school statistical releases show a significant improvement in both primary and secondary school attendance rates in the past year (every authority in Wales has improved its primary attendance rates and every authority bar one, which stayed the same, has improved its secondary attendance rates). Attendance rates in both primary and secondary schools are now at their highest levels since the Welsh Government first started collecting the data.

Secondary school overall absenteeism by pupils of compulsory school age, by sector

	Percentage of school sessions missed							
	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
LA Maintained Secondary Schools	9.5	9.9	9.4	9.1	9.0	8.9	8.6	7.9
Special Schools	11.7	13.7	13.9	12.2	12.3	10.8	11.6	11.0
Independent Schools	5.2	5.6	5.5	5.8	6.0	6.3	5.5	5.3
Total	9.4	9.8	9.3	9.0	9.0	8.9	8.6	7.8

Source: Pupils' Attendance Record, Welsh Government

(a) Figures do not include data for 4 independent schools and 2 special schools that did not respond to the survey.

12. It is clear the inclusion of attendance data as part of school banding has had a positive impact. In 2011/12 the secondary school attendance rate improved by 0.8 percentage points on the previous year. This is the largest single year on year improvement seen over the past seven years.

Primary school overall absenteeism by pupils of compulsory school age, by sector

	Percentage of school sessions missed							
	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
LA Maintained Primary Schools	6.9	7.5	6.9	6.7	6.8	6.9	6.7	6.1
Special Schools	12.9	11.7	10.6	9.0	10.3	10.7	12.6	10.8
Independent Schools	4.3	5.1	4.5	4.7	5.3	4.9	5.3	4.9
Total	6.9	7.5	6.9	6.7	6.8	6.9	6.7	6.2

Source: Pupils' Attendance Record, Welsh Government

(a) Figures do not include data for 2 independent schools and 4 special schools that did not respond to the survey.

13. However school banding is not the only factor that has helped bring about recent improvements in attendance, as evidenced by the recent primary school attendance results. Primary school attendance has improved by 0.5 percentage points on the previous year. This is the largest single year on year improvement seen in the past five years. It is clear that Ministerial focus on this policy area, the development of the Attendance and Behaviour Analysis Framework, and a hands-on, directive approach by Welsh Government officials to attendance have also had an impact.

On Behaviour

14. A key focus of activity on behaviour has centred on the development of training modules in behaviour management as part of the Masters Programme for newly qualified teachers (NQT). The module is due to be introduced in the 2013 Summer Term. As an interim measure £530,000 in funding was made available to local authorities between 2010 and 2012. This has enabled over 3,600 teachers, support staff and LA behaviour support officers to receive training in well evaluated behaviour management techniques. A further £100,000 in funding was also provided to extend access to all local authorities for training in the Incredible Years early intervention programme.

15. The latest data on exclusions in Wales show the rate of permanent exclusion and exclusions of 6 days or more has declined steadily since 2004/05. The rate for fixed term exclusions of 5 days or fewer is the lowest it has been since 2003/04.

On Education Other Than At School (EOTAS)

16. Activity in relation to children and young people educated other than at school is set out in the Welsh Government's Review of EOTAS and responding Action Plan which was published in 2011. Annex C sets out progress made against the actions set out in the Plan.
17. In response to the review the Welsh Government commissioned a research team from Edinburgh University to examine the barriers and ways to improve:
- the planning and commissioning of alternative provision both at an area level and for the individual;
 - the level and strategic use of information on children and young people receiving education otherwise than at school, linking it to the broader performance management system for local authorities;
 - the level of professional support for those working in the sector and better accommodation and facilities;
 - better partnership working between alternative provision, other parts of the education sector and other agencies and services working with young people to facilitate early intervention and ensure an integrated approach to meeting the young person's needs.
18. The research is near completion and the findings and report recommendations are due to be published in the Summer Term 2013.

MOVING FORWARD

Attendance

19. Whilst it is encouraging to see the upturn in attendance rates there is still work to be done. It will be important to ensure local authorities and schools have the skills, confidence and capacity to sustain and build on these improvements. We recognise that in order to sustain long term improvements additional resource will be required. To this end a total of £800,000 in grant funding is being made available to help regional education consortia drive up levels of school attendance. The new grant funding will be made available over two financial years, with £200,000 to be divided amongst the four consortia in 2012/13 and £600,000 in 2013/14. This will be the first opportunity for consortia to work directly and jointly on attendance. Historically, this issue has been dealt with at a local authority level.
20. In March 2011 the Welsh Government published its All Wales Attendance Toolkit – a practical resource tool for Education Welfare Services (EWS) in Wales. The toolkit provides standards and guidance to ensure greater consistency of practice across Wales. Linked to this was a research and consultation exercise on the development of the EWS workforce. The exercise looked at issues

around entry qualifications, induction, training and standards, and the resultant research report presented a number of options for consideration. The different options for the development of an induction pack for the EWS are currently being considered. Consideration is also being given to the development of National Occupational Standards (NOS) for the EWS workforce, which would represent clear benchmarks of performance.

Behaviour and Education Other Than At School (EOTAS)

21. Evidence from the EOTAS Review suggested that the effectiveness of Pupil Referral Units (PRU) would be helped by having a management committee which challenges and supports the delivery of education. To this end regulations to make management committees a mandatory requirement in PRUs are currently being prepared for consultation. Any regulations would be supported by comprehensive guidance on how these committees might best function. Subject to the consultation exercise we expect the regulations to come into force in September 2014.
22. The recommendations and findings from the Edinburgh University research into exclusions and EOTAS provision will play a vital role in the development of the Welsh Government's behaviour policy and particularly its work in relation to ensuring equality of opportunity for all learners regardless of where they are educated.
23. With the establishment of the four education consortia there is a clear need for a more collaborative approach to behaviour and attendance. Sharing and embedding good practice across schools and authorities and ensuring data is used robustly to facilitate the effective use of time and resources will be key to helping build capacity and bringing about sustained improvements.

PROGRESS MADE IN RELATION TO B&A ACTION PLAN RESPONDING TO NBAR		
	Action	Progress
	Attendance	
1	The Assembly Government will, in partnership with the Education Welfare Service (EWS), produce an All Wales Attendance Framework.	ACTION COMPLETED - Published March in 2011.
2	The Assembly Government will revise and develop in consultation with stakeholders the current attendance codes and recording practices.	ACTION COMPLETED - New attendance codes and supporting guidance introduced in September 2010.
	Behaviour	
3	The Assembly Government will assess current restorative justice projects in Wales to inform future work in this area.	ACTION COMPLETED - Good practice learning materials on restorative practices in schools now form part of the Learning Wales website. Restorative practices also form part of the Behaviour Management Module which forms part of the Masters for Newly Qualified Teachers to be introduced in the Summer Term 2013. This area of work will also continue to develop through Welsh Government engagement with the Police Community Secondary School Support Model which champions restorative approaches in schools.
4	The Assembly Government will publish guidance for schools entitled 'Behaviour in Schools: Safe and Effective Intervention'.	ACTION COMPLETED - Published October 2010.
5	The Assembly Government will assess and follow up with local authorities information collected by the Children's Commissioner for Wales on unlawful exclusions.	ACTION COMPLETED - Barnardo's Cymru and Snap Cymru were commissioned to undertake a qualitative study into unlawful exclusions. Report published in June 2011. The findings of the report were taken into consideration in the recent revision of the Welsh Government exclusions guidance.
6	The Assembly Government will carry out a review on provision of Education Otherwise than at School (EOTAS), including the role of pupil referral units.	ACTION COMPLETED - Report and Action Plan published in August 2011.
7	The Assembly Government will commission guidance for schools on the effective use of managed moves.	ACTION COMPLETED - Guidance published in March 2011.
8	The Assembly Government will establish and support a Behaviour Support Team Network.	ACTION COMPLETED - A number of successful network meetings have been held with the next planned for 20 March 2013.
9	The Assembly will produce All Wales Guidance for Pastoral Support Programmes.	POLICY EVOLVED - This work has been taken forward as part of the School Based Counselling strategy.

Children and Young People's Rights		
10	The Assembly Government will produce a guide to the new model of delivering advocacy services for Children and Young People's Partnerships.	POLICY EVOLVED - In 2011 WG consulted on proposed statutory guidance. Since then, the partnership planning structures have changes considerable (no requirement to have a CYPP for regional commissioning) which has had a substantial impact on the guidance. It was therefore decided not to publish the guidance.
11	The Assembly Government will explore the possibility of developing a National Independent Appeal Panel to replace those currently run by local authorities.	ACTION ONGOING - a feasibility study is currently being undertaken by officials within the Administrative Justice Branch of the Permanent Secretary's Division to consider transferring the School Exclusion Independent Appeal Panels into the Welsh Government.
12	The Assembly Government's response to the NBAR Review will continue the dialogue with children and young people started during the Review.	ACTION ONGOING - Wales is the first of the UK nations to enshrine the UNCRC into domestic law with the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011. The Measure was passed by the National Assembly for Wales on 18 January 2011 and approved by Her Majesty in Council on 16 March 2011.
13	The Assembly Government will continue to promote best practice in anti-bullying approaches.	ACTION ONGOING - Comprehensive anti-bullying guidance was published in October 2011. The Welsh Government continues to promote anti-bullying week and host the anti bullying network.
14	The Assembly Government will further develop the role and resources for school councils.	POLICY EVOLVED - The emphasis of this policy has moved away from just school councils and is focussed on how children and young people can be supported to access a variety of opportunities to actively participate in their school communities in order to help them feel empowered, motivated, valued and involved. Work is increasingly looking at how all children and young people can be involved and engaged through participation, including younger children and young people who are marginalised or have additional needs.
Early Intervention		
15	The Assembly Government will produce and distribute Early Intervention training module for Foundation Phase staff.	ACTION COMPLETED
16	The Assembly Government will assess current Nurture Group work in Wales to inform future work in this area.	ACTION COMPLETED - Guidance issued in November 2010

	Early Intervention	
17	The Assembly Government will establish a pilot to trial different approaches to early assessment and identification of Vulnerable Children.	ACTION COMPLETED - Lessons learned from the pilot projects will be disseminated at an All Wales event on 20 March 2013.
18	The Assembly Government will commission an Inquiry into Disengagement as set out in the One Wales commitment.	ACTION COMPLETED - The findings of a qualitative research study to explore young people's disengagement from learning were published in April 2010.
19	The Assembly Government will include guidance on children and young people's behaviour and attendance in the ongoing Review of the Parenting Action Plan.	POLICY EVOLVED - The emphasis of this policy area has changed focus and activity on parental engagement has been taken forward through the work of Community Focussed Schools and the Families First agenda. The Department has recently brought together work relating to policy on reducing the impact of deprivation on learning outcomes, community and family. The new team will work closely with policy teams focussed on helping learners to overcome a range of barriers to learning.
	Literacy	
20	The Assembly Government will focus on literacy as a key priority by drawing together the different strands of work going on across the department, ensuring they reflect current thinking and best practice and that they remain effective and aligned to other policies.	ACTION ONGOING - Activity in this area has been taken forward through the Minister's 20 Point Action Plan, the Improving Schools agenda and the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework.
	Multi and Inter Agency Working	
21	The Assembly Government will trial approaches to multi agency working between health, social services and education to improve mainstream reintegration for vulnerable children.	ACTION COMPLETED - Lessons learned from the pilot projects will be disseminated at an All Wales event on 20 March 2013.
22	The Assembly Government will continue to roll-out the School-based Counselling Strategy.	ACTION COMPLETED - Funding for School Based Counselling to be mainstreamed as it will form part of the RSG from 2013/14.
23	The Assembly Government will collect data on local authority current practices through a questionnaire to inform future policy and targeting of resources.	ACTION COMPLETED

	Multi and Inter Agency Working	
24	The Assembly Government will write to all Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LCSB) Chair's highlighting the link between poor behaviour and attendance and safeguarding concerns.	ACTION COMPLETED
25	The Assembly Government will set up web pages on improving school behaviour and attendance.	ACTION COMPLETED – Information is available on both the Welsh Government's web pages and the Learning Wales website.
26	The Assembly Government will assess the current approaches for multi-agency working for vulnerable children.	ACTION COMPLETED - Lessons learned from the pilot projects will be disseminated at an All Wales event on 20 March 2013.
27	The Assembly Government will scope the current issues for elective home education.	ACTION COMPLETED - Officials currently undertaking analysis of 550 consultation responses on legislative proposals for home education.
28	The Assembly Government will appoint a Project Manager to develop and coordinate the Action Plan and consider expanding staff resources for the implementation of the plan.	ACTION COMPLETED
29	The Assembly Government will assess and evaluate partnership projects between parents and schools.	POLICY EVOLVED - The emphasis of this policy area has changed focus and activity on parental engagement has been taken forward through the work of Community Focussed Schools and the Families First agenda. The Department has recently brought together work relating to policy on reducing the impact of deprivation on learning outcomes, community and family. The new team will work closely with policy teams focussed on helping learners to overcome a range of barriers to learning.
30	The Assembly Government will consider and follow-up as appropriate the recommendations from the Review of the Common Assessment Framework.	ACTION ONGOING - Policy input provided as and when required.
31	The Assembly Government will pilot models to improve the links between Pupil Referral Units and other EOTAS provision, and mainstream schools.	ACTION COMPLETED - Lessons learned from the pilot projects will be disseminated at an All Wales event on 20 March 2013.
32	The Assembly Government will consider the relevant recommendations at the next review of Children and Young People's Plans	ACTION COMPLETED - This work is being taken forward on a consortia basis as part of the Improving Schools Agenda.

School Effectiveness		
33	The Assembly Government will adapt and translate the Social Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) materials for primary and secondary schools in Wales.	ACTION COMPLETED - Published in March 2009
34	The Assembly Government will consult with Estyn on the change to inspection arrangements in light of the NBAR recommendations.	ACTION COMPLETED - Officials maintain an ongoing dialogue with Estyn in relation to policy developments in behaviour and attendance.
35	The Assembly Government will commissions reports on transition arrangements	ACTION COMPLETED - A rapid evidence assessment investigating the drop in attainment during the transition phase with particular focus on child poverty was received in June 2010.
36	The Assembly Government will refine the School Evaluation Profile of the School Effectiveness Framework to increase the focus on behaviour and attendance aspects.	ACTION COMPLETED - Work being taken forward on a consortia basis through the Improving Schools agenda. This work is supported by the development of the Attendance and Behaviour Analysis Framework.
37	The Assembly Government will explore the possibility of a lead professional for behaviour and attendance through the expansion of the pilot for the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) co-ordinator.	ACTION COMPLETED - Lessons learned from the pilot projects will be disseminated at an All Wales event on 20 March 2013.
38	The Assembly Government will update the Governors Guide to the Law.	ACTION ONGOING - Governor training regulations are due to come into force in May 2013. Policy updates to Governor's Guide to the Law as and when required.
39	The Assembly Government will write to all schools setting out the key aims of the Action Plan and highlighting specific recommendations.	ACTION COMPLETED
Training and Development		
40	The Assembly Government has produced a paper in response to the NBAR training recommendations and will take this forward to feed in to the training agenda for Wales which is currently under review.	ACTION ONGOING - Between 2010 and 2012 a total of £530K in grant funding was provided to LAs for use on training in well evaluated behaviour management techniques. A Behaviour Management Module will be included in the Masters Programme for Newly Qualified Teachers from Summer Term 2013.

Training and Development		
41	The Assembly Government will identify and recommend an appropriate training structure for the Education Welfare Service (EWS).	ACTION ONGOING - This action now forms part of the New Behaviour and Attendance Action Plan developed in response to the Minister's Teaching makes a Difference speech.
42	The Assembly Government will make available 'taster sessions' to local authority representatives on training options for behaviour management.	ACTION COMPLETED - £530K in grant funding provided to LAs for use on training in well evaluated behaviour management techniques.
43	The Assembly Government will continue to support teachers through the Teacher Support helpline and coaching service.	ACTION ONGOING
44	The Assembly Government will distribute a behaviour management handbook to current secondary and primary Initial Teacher Training (ITT) students, Induction and Early Professional Development (EPD) teachers.	ACTION COMPLETED - Handbook for secondary schools was published in October 2008 and the primary school book was published in July 2012.
45	The Assembly Government will build aspects of children and young people's rights into the review of the professional development framework for teachers.	ACTION ONGOING - Wales is the first of the UK nations to enshrine the UNCRC into domestic law with the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011. The Measure was passed by the National Assembly for Wales on 18 January 2011 and approved by Her Majesty in Council on 16 March 2011.

PROGRESS MADE ON THE NEW B&A ACTION PLAN RESPONDING TO THE MINISER'S NEW PRIORITIES

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT		
IDENTIFIED NEED	ASSOCIATED ACTIVITY	PROGRESS TO DATE
<p>Training and development were recognised in the National Behaviour and Attendance Review as a major area for improvement, as evidence suggested that many teachers and other school staff felt ill-equipped to deal with poor behaviour in the classroom and many had received very little training on this aspect as part of their initial teacher training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop training modules on behaviour management and attendance to be delivered through Initial Teacher Training, Induction and Continuing Professional Development. 	<p>ACTION COMPLETED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Behaviour Management Module will be introduced in Summer Term 2013 which forms part of the Masters for newly qualified teachers (NQTs). Learning Wales is a new web-based resource designed to improve standards in schools across Wales. Behaviour and Attendance forms part of the key Improvement Areas on the site. All resource documents on the site have been quality assured by an expert panel of educational practitioners and professionals.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund training in well evaluated behaviour management programmes. 	<p>ACTION COMPLETED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £530K in funding was provided to local authorities between 2010 and 2012. This enabled over 3600 teachers, support staff and LA behaviour support officers to receive training in well evaluated behaviour management techniques. £20K in funding was provided to Bangor University in 2010 and a further £80K in funding in 2011 to extend access to all 22 authorities to the Incredible Years early intervention training programme.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT		
	ASSOCIATED ACTIVITY	PROGRESS TO DATE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the use of Restorative Practices in schools, working with the Police through the All-Wales School Liaison Core Programme. 	<p>ACTION ONGOING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good practice learning materials on restorative practices in schools now form part of the Learning Wales website. Restorative practices also form part of the Behaviour Management Module in the Masters for Newly Qualified Teachers to be introduced in the Summer Term 2013. This area of work will also continue to develop through Welsh Government engagement with the Police and their Secondary School Support Model which champions restorative approaches in schools.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop training and development and career framework for the Education Welfare Service (EWS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linked to this was a research and consultation exercise on the development of the EWS workforce. The exercise looked at issues around entry qualifications, induction, training and standards, and the resultant research report presented a number of options for consideration. The different options for the development of an induction pack for the EWS are currently being considered. Consideration is also being given to the development of National Occupational Standards (NOS) for the EWS workforce, which would represent clear benchmarks of performance.

STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY		
IDENTIFIED NEED	ASSOCIATED ACTIVITY	PROGRESS TO DATE
<p>To ensure consistency of approach the performance of schools and local authorities on attendance, behaviour and education otherwise than at school (EOTAS) will be assessed in greater depth and will be allied to the new approaches for monitoring standards, improvement and progress being developed by the Welsh Government's School Standards Unit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an Attendance Analysis Framework for use by local authorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACTION COMPLETED An Attendance Analysis Framework has been developed in consultation with LA data, EWS and school improvement officers. The introduction of the Framework last year was accompanied by considerable 'hands-on' support from Welsh Government officials. This involved officials using the framework to undertake extensive analysis of each local authority's attendance data. A frank report on the findings of this analysis was produced which then formed the basis for a 'stocktake' with each separate authority. The 'stocktake' included discussion of the analysis, identification of performance issues, exploring reasons for underperformance as well as trying to identify examples of good practice and successful interventions. The Framework has been extremely well received and from the 2012/13 academic year much of the data within the Attendance Analysis Framework has been included in the All Wales Core Data Sets for schools and local authorities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure attendance is included in the new banding system for schools and schools' published information. 	<p>ACTION COMPLETED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance data has formed part of the measure for Secondary School Banding since its introduction in 2011.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a national collection of data on exclusions at pupil and school level to be used for benchmarking. 	<p>ACTION ONGOING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusion data was collected as part of the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) for the first time in 2012 and will become a mandatory data item in the collection from 2013. The data is currently going through the quality assurance and validation process and will provide an invaluable source of data at upon which to focus policy development.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold an annual 'open and honest' discussion with local authorities to discuss performance on exclusions / attendance and pupils Educated Otherwise Than at School (EOTAS). 	<p>ACTION COMPLETED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Government officials met with each local authority between November 2011 and March 2012 to discuss attendance and behaviour performance issues, exploring reasons for underperformance as well as trying to identify examples of good practice and successful interventions.

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT AND ALN		
IDENTIFIED NEED	ASSOCIATED ACTIVITY	PROGRESS TO DATE
<p>Development work will attempt to improve the coordination of the various agencies' support for pupils who have the greatest needs and thereby introduce more efficient and cost-effective practices throughout Wales.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the information gathered through the behaviour and attendance pilots to inform future approaches to individual support being developed through the ALN pilots and future reform of the statementing process. 	<p>ACTION ONGOING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons learned from the pilot projects will be disseminated at an All Wales event on 20 March 2013.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish and implement an action plan on improving Education Otherwise Than at School (EOTAS). • Commission research to explore barriers in providing full-time education and varying approaches / effectiveness of local authority practices. 	<p>ACTION ONGOING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EOTAS Review and Action Plan was published in August 2011. • in 2012 the Welsh Government commissioned research to examine the process of exclusion from school in Wales and the delivery, planning and commissioning of education provisions for children educated other than at school. The report and recommendation are due for publication in the Summer Term 2013.

EOTAS ACTION PLAN - PROGRESS MADE TO DATE

No.	Action	Update
Communications and staff development		
1	Develop ways of sharing good practice, including use of approaches being developed through the School Effectiveness Framework, web pages and the Behaviour Support Team Network.	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Resources have been made available on the Learning Wales website. ○ Welsh Government officials have meetings with local authority EWS (Behaviour Support Network) to disseminate information and share good practice. (The next meeting to be held on 20 March 2013).
2	Ensure that those delivering EOTAS are included in the development and implementation of new elements on behaviour and additional learning needs within the Welsh Government's new approaches on continuing professional development of education practitioners.	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Resources have been made available on the Learning Wales website. ○ PRU conferences are held every year to disseminate information and share good practice.
3	Enhance methods of communicating with PRU staff nationally, particularly the sharing of good practice.	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PRU conferences are held every year to disseminate information and share good practice. ○ PRUs are sent the weekly Dysg e-newsletter sent to all schools in Wales.
Funding		
4	Amend funding formulae to include pupils solely registered at EOTAS.	Completed The Local Government Settlement Distribution Sub Group has agreed to propose that EOTAS data should be included in the RSG distribution formula for the 2013-14 settlement onwards.
5	Undertake a one-off research project which will: explore the barriers which local authorities face in providing full-time provision to excluded pupils; consider reintegration rates across Welsh local authorities; and produce case studies of good practice.	Ongoing In 2012 Welsh Government commissioned Edinburgh University to examine the delivery, planning and commissioning of EOTAS provision. The intention is to publish the findings and recommendations of this research in the Summer term 2013. This research will inform policy development for improving the quality and consistency of EOTAS provision in Wales.

No.	Action	Update
Management and organisation		
6	Improve the information available on children and young people educated outside schools through setting up an EOTAS PLASC and tying this into the broader performance framework for local authorities.	Completed In arriving at the RSG, the Local Government Settlement Distribution Sub Group has agreed to include EOTAS pupils who are entitled to FSM (identified in the EOTAS PLASC data collection) within the FSM data.
7	Continue the registration and de-registration process for PRUs and reaffirm through regular audit of LAs' provision.	Ongoing Audit of LA provision is carried out approximately every six months.
8	Make management committees statutory in Wales and issue guidance on how they should function effectively.	Ongoing Policy officials have instructed Legal Services to draft regulations to require management committees for pupil referral units.
5	Undertake a one-off research project which will: explore the barriers which local authorities face in providing full-time provision to excluded pupils; consider reintegration rates across Welsh local authorities; and produce case studies of good practice.	Ongoing Welsh Government commissioned Edinburgh University to examine the delivery, planning and commissioning of EOTAS provision. The intention is to publish the findings and recommendations of this research in the Summer term 2013. This research will inform policy development for improving the quality and consistency of EOTAS provision in Wales.
Standards and commissioning		
9	Publish new guidance on commissioning alternative provision.	Ongoing This action will be informed by the results of the Edinburgh University research.
10	Consider the opportunities to further embed and expand the delivery of the All-Wales School Liaison Core Programme in EOTAS locations.	Ongoing Officials are in the process of arranging a meeting with a representative from the AWSCLP to discuss how Welsh Government might work with AWSCLP in the future.
11	Develop minimum standards of provision for EOTAS.	Ongoing The Edinburgh University research will inform policy development for improving the quality and consistency of EOTAS provision in Wales.
12	Improve the accuracy of recording of attendance for dual registered pupils.	Ongoing Welsh Government officials are working with schools, local authorities and software suppliers to take this forward.

No.	Action	Update
Standards and commissioning (continued)		
13	Develop a benchmarking framework for EOTAS pupils, which could include aspects such as attainment, reintegration rates, exclusions and attendance.	Ongoing The Edinburgh University research will inform policy development for improving the quality and consistency of EOTAS provision in Wales.
14	Use the behaviour and attendance pilots to improve approaches nationally to reduce the numbers of pupils receiving education outside school; to increase the level of reintegration of children and young people from EOTAS to mainstream schooling; and improve the sharing of expertise and improve the levels of communication between EOTAS provision, special schools and mainstream schools.	Ongoing Of the 9 behaviour pilots that were originally rolled out, the four most promising pilots were continued for a further academic year. Two of these (Cardiff and Monmouthshire) were focused on improving the links between PRUs and schools. The findings of the behaviour pilots will be disseminated to local authority leads on behaviour and attendance at an all-Wales event in March 2013, after which officials will consider how else these approaches might be shared across Wales.
15	Set out clearly the responsibilities of schools towards pupils who are registered with them.	Ongoing Guidance was issued to schools, LAs and software suppliers in March 2012, and ongoing work with LAs, schools and software suppliers. This is a very complex area due to the variety of provision across 22 LAs.
16	Continue to ensure that the needs of EOTAS learners are fully taken into account in the development and implementation of national policies.	Ongoing The Edinburgh University research will inform policy development for EOTAS provision in Wales.
17	Use the findings from the additional learning needs (ALN) pilots to consider how best to provide for pupils with special educational needs and to avoid their being placed inappropriately in PRUs and other EOTAS.	Ongoing The first phase of the ALN pilots has completed and the Action Research report for the second phase is due shortly. Officials have asked for a third phase of Action Research to be undertaken. The findings of the pilots will inform policy development and legislative change.

Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc Children and Young People Committee

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Lesley Griffiths AM
Minister for Health and Social Services
Welsh Government
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

28 February 2013

Dear Minister

Legislative Consent Memorandum for the Children and Families Bill

As you will be aware, the Business Committee has referred the above LCM to us for consideration.

We have had some initial discussions and would be grateful if you would provide some clarification in relation to the following points—

1. Why these provisions were not included within the Welsh Government's Social Services and Well-being Bill as they relate to provisions contained within that Bill. Arguably, such an approach would have complemented the Welsh Government's intention to consolidate legislation wherever possible.
2. What transitional measures are being put into place in relation to the dis-application of the Adoption and Children Act register to Wales, and in particular—
 - i. although the LCM seeks to remove the power of the Secretary of State to direct Welsh local authorities to provide information for the adoption register, will Welsh local authorities continue to do this in practice until a new register for Wales is established?
 - ii. what are the longer term plans for cross-UK sharing of matching data in light of the recent commitments in the Deputy Minister's [response](#) to recommendation 6 in our [report on Adoption](#)?
 - iii. as the Welsh Government currently jointly funds the National Adoption Register for England and Wales, will these arrangements continue in practice until a national register is established for Wales?

Bae Caerdydd
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

3. What is the timeframe for introducing a new national adoption register for Wales?

As we have to complete our work on the LCM within the next few weeks, I would be grateful for your response by **Wednesday 6 March 2013**. Once Members have had sight of your response, they may wish to invite you to attend a short evidence session, time permitting. I will confirm this with you separately.

A copy of this letter goes to Mark Drakeford AM, Chair of the Health Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine Chapman".

Christine Chapman AM
Chair



Ein cyf/Our ref LF/GT/0141/13

Mark Drakeford AM
Chair of Health and Social Services Committee

Christine Chapman AM
Chair of the Children and Young People Committee

National Assembly for Wales

5 March 2013

Dear Mark and Christine,

Thank you both for your letters of 28 February to the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the Legislative Consent Memorandum (LCM) for the Department for Education Children and Families Bill.

The areas that your respective Committees require clarification on are set out below.

Point 1:

You have asked why the provisions were not included in the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Bill 'as they relate to provisions contained in that Bill'. There are two such areas – care plans and adoption.

Care Plans

The provision in relation to care plans (section 31A plans) is contained within Part 5 of the Children Act 1989 that relate to matters of court proceedings. This rests outside of the competence of the Assembly. The section 31A plan is a distinct element of the social services overall care plan for the child and is provided to the Court as part of the care proceedings process. The social services plan is provided for within the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Bill.

In practice the plan may be exactly the same document but it does not have to be and it may be that the social services plan for the child is much broader in its scope than that produced for the purposes of section 31A. This situation is provided for at Section 67(5) of the Social Services and Well Being (SS&WB) Bill:

The local authority may-

- (a) prepare or review a plan under this section at the same time as it or another body is preparing or reviewing another document in the case of the child concerned and
- (b) include the other document in the plan.

Adoption Register

Members will know from their recent inquiry into Adoption in Wales my plans for a National Adoption Service for Wales. Adoption is primarily a devolved matter and increasingly we are continuing to develop distinct policy approaches that are best suited to the priorities and circumstances of the people in Wales. The removal of Wales from the England and Wales Register as currently provided for in the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (section 125 to 131 refer) is the natural next step in taking forward our Welsh agenda. There is nothing currently in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill covering a stand alone adoption register for Wales. However, it is my intention, if necessary, to bring forward a government amendment at stage 2 of the Bill scrutiny to achieve this. A Wales only Register will form an integral part of the National Adoption Service allowing the new Service to take a tailored approach to creating a Register which will fit the needs of both children and prospective adopters in Wales.

I can however assure you that I will keep you informed of progress in establishing a register along with wider changes in the area of adoption.

Point 2 (i) – (iii) and Point 3

In relation to your specific points about transitional arrangements:

(i) & (3) The existing arrangements will remain in place until the law changes and our new register has been established. On current plans we envisage that a new National Adoption Register for Wales will be in place ready for the dis-application of the Adoption and Children's Act to Wales in April 2014.

(ii) My officials have already had talks with counterparts in Department for Education to ensure "plumbing" arrangements between the two Registers are established; as such no children will be dis-advantaged as a result of a Wales only Register

(iii) I can confirm that the existing joint funding arrangements will continue in practice & remain in place until separate England and Wales registers are established.

I am grateful to both the Health and Social Services and Child and Young Persons Committee's in their consideration on these matters and their support to the LCM. There will also be opportunity to discuss these matters when I lead on the plenary debate in April (16).

I also remain committed to keeping members regularly informed of progress made in advancing my plans for a Sustainable Social Service in Wales. The Assembly's scrutiny of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill will provide the platform for a full consideration of all matters of social wellbeing for the people of Wales, including those areas where there is an overlap with the LCM.

Yours Sincerely



Gwenda Thomas AC / AM

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Plant a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services

(English below)

Cwestiynau i Estyn ar Adroddiad Blynyddol 2011-2012

Diogelu plant

C1 Pa mor dda y mae plant a phobl ifanc yn cael eu diogelu mewn lleoliadau ledled Cymru a beth arall y gellid ei wneud i wella hyn?

Tlodi ac anfantais: Mynd i'r afael â'r bwloch mewn cyrhaeddiad

C2 Sut y dylai Llywodraeth Cymru sicrhau bod y Grant Amddifadedd Disgyblion yn gwneud gwahaniaeth amlwg o ran gwella perfformiad addysgol disgyblion o dan anfantais a bod ganddo fwy o ffocws nag ymyriadau tebyg blaenorol?

Cynyddu capasiti

C3 A fydd y £7 miliwn sydd wedi'i ddyrannu i'r Rhaglen Gymorth Genedlaethol i helpu i roi'r Fframwaith Llythrennedd a Rhifedd ar waith yn ddigonol i gynyddu'r capasiti sydd ei angen?

Arweinyddiaeth

C4 Pwy a ddylai fod yn bennaf cyfrifol am ddarparu arweinyddiaeth ar y cyd ar bob lefel mewn addysg a hyfforddiant yng Nghymru – rhywbeth yr ydych yn dweud ei fod yn angenrheidiol?

Arweinwyr systemau a consortia rhanbarthol

C5 Faint o gynnydd y mae'r pedwar consortia rhanbarthol a'u harweinyddion systemau wedi'i wneud?

Newid

C6 Mewn cyfnod o newid sylweddol mewn polisi addysg a hyfforddiant yng Nghymru, gan gynnwys y ffordd y caiff gwasanaethau eu darparu o bosibl, a oes gennych unrhyw bryderon na fydd digon o sefydlogrwydd i sicrhau y gwneir y gwelliannau angenrheidiol?

HMCI's annual report on education and training in Wales 2011-2012

Estyn response to the Children and Young People Committee

February 2013

Safeguarding

Q1 How well are children and young people being safeguarded in settings across Wales and what more could be done to improve this?

Most schools have appropriate policies and procedures for safeguarding. Where schools do not have appropriate procedures, it is usually because of inadequate pre-employment checks (CRBs) or a lack of understanding of the school's exact role in safeguarding pupils. To improve, schools should make sure that a senior manager has oversight of safeguarding and carries out systematic and rigorous checks that procedures are implemented consistently across the whole school at all times.

Estyn has recently provided schools with a safeguarding self-evaluation checklist to complete before inspection. This has the potential to help schools check their procedures systematically. Currently, this is only completed by schools when they are due to be inspected. We would recommend that all schools use the self-evaluation or similar form to check their procedures and practices on a regular basis.

Local authorities play a key role in managing the safeguarding of children and young people in most schools and settings. In the summer of 2011, we conducted a joint investigation with the social services inspectorate, CSSIW, of how well Pembrokeshire local authority safeguards children in its schools and other education services. We also undertook a joint survey of safeguarding and behaviour management in a wider selection of pupil referral units nationally. As a result of our published findings, local authorities, schools and pupil referral units across Wales have looked more closely at their own safeguarding practices. Increasingly, they have been developing and updating their policies and procedures for safe recruitment and child protection. There remain a few schools and local authorities where procedures are under-developed, arrangements for safe recruitment are not rigorously applied, key staff have not received recent training and a few are not aware of how to respond to a disclosure.

Local authorities are only now beginning to monitor regularly their schools' use of behaviour management strategies, and how the schools report on them. Following our reports, the more pro-active local authorities have issued guidance about how to use 'time out' appropriately with pupils to de-escalate difficult situations.

Estyn undertakes annual monitoring visits to independent residential special schools to check on standards and on safeguarding as these schools house some of our most vulnerable pupils.

Poverty and disadvantage: Addressing the gap in achievement

Q2 How should the Welsh Government ensure that the Pupil Deprivation Grants makes a tangible difference in improving educational performance among disadvantaged pupils and is more focused than previous interventions of a similar nature?

There is a danger that schools will use the PDG funding to support underachievers generally rather than focus on disadvantaged pupils. All pupils who are disadvantaged should benefit from it and not just those who are underachieving.

To help to focus on disadvantaged pupils, schools need to set clear and quantifiable targets for disadvantaged learners that are linked directly to the use of PDG funding, then monitor progress against these targets. In a few schools, planning involving PDGs has lacked detail and funds have been used to plug general budget deficits.

We have published a series of remit reports over the last three years about the use of grant funding for disadvantaged learners. These include: Thematic reports - Tackling child poverty and disadvantage in schools - January 2010; Thematic reports - Tackling poverty and disadvantage in schools: working with the community and other services - July 2011; Thematic reports - Effective practice in tackling poverty and disadvantage in schools - November 2012.

Guidance for the PDG needs to state clearly that actions that schools design to bring about improvements in the achievement of deprived pupils need to be focused specifically on these pupils. Too many actions in schools' funding plans for the PDG are focused on raising the achievement of underperforming pupils and not those who are disadvantaged by poverty. Many schools have focused their spending on literacy and numeracy initiatives designed to help learners who have poor skills in these areas, not specifically on raising the achievement of FSM learners.

Local authorities scrutinise schools' spending plans for the PDG. However, the advice they have given to school to refine their plans is tends to focus on processes in too many instances. For example, LAs comment that targets are not specific enough, or that plans need to identify responsible staff. While this advice is useful to improve the school's planning and evaluation procedures, it does not help the school enough to identify exactly how to improve the outcomes for FSM pupils. Local authorities do not give enough guidance on how to spend the PDG. A few LAs have organised events to share good practice in raising the achievement of disadvantaged learners, but this is not widespread enough.

Estyn is prepared to undertake a survey of the use being made of the Pupil Deprivation Grant and to make recommendations for further action as necessary.

Building capacity

Q3 Will the £7 million that has been allocated to the National Support Programme to help deliver the Literacy and Numeracy Framework be sufficient in building up the required capacity?

To answer this would require us to speculate on what might happen in future whereas Estyn's job is normally to report on existing evidence. The NSP does not stand alone in its responsibility to deliver the LNF of course. There is potential for it to be coherent with and to build on other school improvement initiatives at consortium, local authority and school cluster levels in order to maximise and enhance its impact.

Leadership

Q4 Who should be primarily responsible for providing the collective leadership at all levels in education and training in Wales, which you identify as necessary?

Leadership roles are outlined in the WG's action plan for 'Improving Schools'. The challenge is to create a synergy between leaders at national, regional and local level, including that being offered in schools. The School Effectiveness Framework model still offers a credible structure for doing this although in practice, it is not being achieved consistently at present. The 'Improving Schools' Action Plan based on the Minister's 20-point speech continues to define SEF as involving leadership at a series of levels. Achieving coherence in what is being offered at those levels and a consensus about it is the challenge.

System leaders and regional consortia

Q5 How much progress has been made by the four regional consortia and the respective system leaders in place?

Progress is uneven at the moment. Three consortia are up and running and the fourth has been set up and its delivery of the school improvement function across the six authorities will begin formally in April. System leaders in regional consortia are key to helping schools to improve and change their culture. Their success will be judged by how well they can analyse challenges, plan interventions and support, use existing good practice, set clear expectations for action and how effectively the action leads to an improvement in learner outcomes.

While there is evidence that progress is being made in regional consortia on identifying, training and using system leaders, progress is uneven and there has been too little joined-up thinking across Wales as a whole. We need:

- common criteria for the selection of system leaders
- a definition of the core role of system leader that would allow some local flexibility
- agreement about the knowledge, understanding and skills/competencies that system leaders need to demonstrate
- agreed monitoring arrangements for quality assurance purposes.

There is a need to work to an agreed framework for system leadership and we need joint training at national level that will offer a common starting point and context for more regional training by consortia to build capacity in the school sector, among headteachers, middle leaders and teachers.

The outcome of the training at national level would be to set consistent standards for the role of system leader and consistent expectations for the level of professionalism that the role requires.

Estyn has trained more system leaders as peer inspectors and expect them to join Estyn inspections in order to hone their skill-sets and develop a good working knowledge of inspection standards and of the schools they are involved in inspecting.

Although we have yet to inspect the school improvement services being delivered in conjunction with the regional consortia, we have seen early indications that where system leaders are effective, they are tackling issues and having a greater impact than some of the previous school improvement link officers, especially in weaker local authorities. However there are a few examples where system leaders are less effective and procedures to quality assure their work is at an early stage

Change

Q6 At a time of considerable change in education and training policy in Wales, including potentially the way services are delivered, do you have any concerns that there is insufficient stability to deliver the required improvements?

It is true that a number of aspects of education provision and services are currently under review and for good reasons. Before introducing wholesale change there will be an opportunity to reflect on the likely effects and cumulative effects of changes when or if some or all recommendations from the different reviews are implemented. Some kind of large-scale modelling exercise would help at that point to consider aspects such as the dependencies between review strands, the resourcing implications and the optimum timing for implementation or transition so as to maintain stability.

(English below)

Presenoldeb ac ymddygiad

Ymddygiad

C1 Yr ydych yn dweud bod ymddygiad mewn ysgolion yn dda yn gyffredinol. A yw hyn yn golygu bod y sefyllfa wedi gwella ers cyhoeddi adroddiad gwreiddiol yr Adolygiad Cenedlaethol o Ymddygiad a Phresenoldeb?

C2 Awgrymodd yr athro Ken Reid y dylai'r pwyslais bellach fod ar bresenoldeb yn hytrach nag ymddygiad. Beth yw eich barn ynglŷn â hyn?

Anghenion dysgu ychwanegol

C3 Un o'r meysydd y mae'r Pwyllgor yn ei ystyried yn yr ymchwiliad hwn yw cymorth i ddisgyblion ag anghenion dysgu ychwanegol. A yw materion yn ymwneud ag ymddygiad a phresenoldeb yn effeithio'n anghymesur ar ddisgyblion ag anghenion dysgu ychwanegol?

Gwaharddiadau

C4 Beth yw'r prif broblemau y mae angen mynd i'r afael â hwy i leihau gwaharddiadau ymhellach?

Attendance and Behaviour

Estyn response to the Children and Young People Committee

February 2013

Behaviour

Q1 You say that behaviour in schools is generally good. Does this represent an improving picture since the publication of the original NBAR report?

Behaviour in schools is generally good, but the picture is not necessarily improving - inspection evidence does not show a significant deterioration or improvement in behaviour over the past few years. When behaviour is not judged good in schools, it is usually due to low level disruption. Pupils with additional learning needs are more likely to demonstrate off-task behaviour. Serious behaviour problems tend to be limited to a small number of specific pupils.

Many of the findings of the original NBAR report are still valid. Where teaching is uninspiring or activities are not matched well enough to the needs of pupils, they are more likely to misbehave or engage in low level disruption.

Q2 Professor Ken Reid suggested that the emphasis should now be on attendance rather than behaviour. What are your views on this?

Overall, improving attendance is a broader, more wide-ranging challenge for the majority of pupils in most schools than behaviour. Major behavioural issues are more likely to be relevant to a small number of specific learners or for specific schools or units – in these cases, improving behaviour management procedures is paramount.

Generally, good attendance and behaviour are both important. Poor behaviour not only inhibits the progress and learning of an individual but it can also impact on the progress and motivation of other pupils in the class. Many of the schools who have been placed in statutory categories of follow-up have recommendations to improve attendance.

Poor attendance and behaviour both have a negative impact on children's learning. In questionnaire responses, around a third of secondary school pupils say that other pupils do not behave well and enable them to get their work done.

One contributory factor in relation to poor pupil attendance is that their parents may themselves have had a negative experience of education and therefore do not see the value of insisting that their children attend school. Family Learning projects can help to take away the parent's fear of the school environment and re-engage them and their children with the education system.

Additional learning needs

Q3 One of the areas the Committee are considering in this inquiry is support for pupils with additional learning needs. Do issues of behaviour and attendance disproportionately affect pupils with additional learning needs?

Issues of behaviour and attendance disproportionately affect pupils with additional learning needs. Pupils that have been excluded – either temporarily or permanently – from a school because of their behaviour often have additional learning needs. The highest proportion of excluded pupils (nearly 40%) are taught in a pupil referral unit.

In many PRUs, pupils do improve their reading, spelling and social skills and gain a range of suitable qualifications. Pupils learn to manage their behaviour and many, particularly at key stage 3, make a successful return to their school. In a minority of PRUs however, pupils do not develop their literacy and numeracy skills well enough, do not regularly contribute to decisions about the life and work of the PRUs and stay at the PRU for long periods.

In the 2011-2012 annual report, we stated that ‘many schools support pupils with additional learning needs effectively. However, in a few schools, pupils with additional learning needs in mainstream classes do not receive the support they need’.

Exclusions

Q4 What are the main problems that need to be tackled to further reduce exclusions?

In any given school, one or more of the following might be an issue:

- Lack of early identification of those at risk of disengagement
- No tailored support that has a focus on obstacles to learning
- No referral for counselling or multi-agency support
- Pupils without the core skills to access the school curriculum.
- Low teacher expectations, particularly of more able pupils, or a failure to match challenging activities to pupils’ needs and abilities. This was the case with a minority of teachers in over half of secondary schools inspected last year. Generally, there is too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching both within and between schools.
- Ineffective behaviour management policies or inconsistent application of the policy because teachers do not manage low-level disruptive behaviour effectively.