



Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru **The National Assembly for Wales**

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg **The Children, Young People and Education** **Committee**

Dydd Mercher, 11 Chwefror 2015
Wednesday, 11 February 2015

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Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynndi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal,
cynhwysir trawsgrifiad o'r cyfieithu ar y pryd.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee.
In addition, a transcription of the simultaneous interpretation is included.

Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol **Committee members in attendance**

Angela Burns

Ceidwadwyr Cymreig
Welsh Conservatives

Keith Davies	Llafur Labour
Paul Davies	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig (yn dirprwyo ar ran Suzy Davies) Welsh Conservatives (substitute for Suzy Davies)
Ann Jones	Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Labour (Chair of the Committee)
Lynne Neagle	Llafur Labour
Aled Roberts	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Simon Thomas	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales

Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance

Simon Brown	Cyfarwyddwr Strategol, Estyn Strategic Director, Estyn
Ann Keane	Prif Arolygydd Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales
Meilyr Rowlands	Cyfarwyddwr Strategol, Estyn Strategic Director, Estyn

Swyddogion Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru yn bresennol
National Assembly for Wales officials in attendance

Sarah Bartlett	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Stephen Davies	Cynghorydd Cyfreithiol Legal Adviser
Michael Dauncey	Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service
Gareth Rogers	Ail Glerc Second Clerk

Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 09:32.
The meeting began at 09:32.

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions

[1] **Ann Jones:** Good morning, everybody. Welcome to the Children, Young People and Education Committee. Can I just ask people to just switch their mobile phones to silent? If you're using your laptops, can you make sure that the 'ping' is off every time you use it? Thanks very much. It doesn't do anything other than wind me up sometimes; so, there we go. We've got apologies this morning from John Griffiths, David Rees, Bethan Jenkins and Suzy Davies, but Paul's substituting for Suzy; welcome again, Paul. And just the usual housekeeping rules: we're not expecting the fire alarm to go off, but should it go off, we'll take our instructions from the ushers. If we're able to go out, the assembly point is the Pierhead building, so that's where we'll go. We operate bilingually, as you know, so translation from Welsh to English is on channel 1 on the headsets, and channel 0 is the floor language, which is amplified, should you need it. I think that's about all. I don't think—. Do members need to declare any interests before we discuss the Estyn annual report? Okay, fine, that's great.

09:33

Craffu ar Adroddiad Blynyddol Estyn 2013-2014
Scrutiny of Estyn's Annual Report 2013-2014

[2] **Ann Jones:** We move into scrutiny of Estyn's annual report, 2013-14. We're delighted to have you with us. You're fairly regular to this committee anyway, aren't you? It's your last appearance before this committee, because I believe that you're shortly retiring, so—

[3] **Ms Keane:** It is, indeed.

[4] **Ann Jones:** We'll try and be gentle, but I'm sure that you can be just as forceful back as well; so, that's it. Would you like to introduce yourselves for the record, then? Then, if it's okay, we'll go into some questions.

[5] **Ms Keane:** Right. I'm Ann Keane, Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales.

[6] **Ann Jones:** Thank you.

[7] **Mr Rowlands:** Meilyr Rowlands, strategic director, Estyn.

[8] **Mr Brown:** I'm Simon Brown, strategic director.

[9] **Ann Jones:** Okay. Thanks very much. As it's your last report, would you like to make any opening comments?

[10] **Ms Keane:** I think, overall—I have thought about this—I would like to say that, when I first became chief inspector, I had been hoping for improvements at a faster rate. I think the common inspection framework we've introduced has been effective. I think that the inspections now are more respected than they used to be. I think we are getting it right now, we're closer to the mark, but I am pleased to see that I think there have also been some modest improvements, and there are signs of greater improvements to come.

[11] **Ann Jones:** Okay. Well, thanks for that, and that, I think, sets the questioning off there. Angela, do you want to take the first section, on overall standards and trends in primary schools?

[12] **Angela Burns:** Absolutely, Chair, thank you. But, before I start, Ann, I would like to formally put on record the appreciation that I personally have—and I know that my colleagues in the Welsh Conservatives team have—for the work that you've done over the last five years. I think that, you know, the Estyn inspectors walk a tricky line here, but it's been great to have the ability to have a baseline against which we can all operate, and, I believe, a much clearer picture of education. I just wanted to wish you, personally, all the very best, going forward. I'm sure we'll all say it on the record in the Assembly, when it comes to debating it, but to actually be able to say it to your face—. I just wanted to thank you very much indeed.

[13] **Ms Keane:** Thank you. I appreciate that.

[14] **Angela Burns:** Having said that, the Chair is completely wrong, because I don't really do cuddly that well. [*Laughter.*] I suppose I just wanted to ask you to give an overview

of the changes in the trends in standards. Whilst I note from your report that there's a slightly brighter horizon for secondary schools, our primary schools, which, of course, set so much of the canvas of our education, are doing worse, and perhaps you could expand on that a bit more.

[15] **Ms Keane:** As you know, we have had, since 2010, a very strong focus on literacy first, and then more on numeracy. And since the introduction of the literacy and numeracy framework as a statutory instrument, then we have been inspecting—and in the year of this annual report, we did inspect—to the standards in the LNF. That has raised the bar in the sectors, and I would say that we have seen more success on the literacy front than we have on numeracy. I think we say in the annual report that, by now, all schools have plans, they've audited their curriculum for the teaching of literacy, they have mapped where the gaps are, they have tried to remedy those, and all schools have plans for literacy, and literacy development, across the curriculum. The same is not the case for numeracy; only around half of schools have well-developed plans for numeracy, and in only half of schools is the standard high enough. So there is a way to go on numeracy.

[16] Wales has closed the gap between the attainment of the eligible-for-free-school-meals pupils and the others, across the board—right through the age range, to some degree. And let's hope that that trend continues. Attendance rates have seen a definite improvement. There are several performance indicators that improved. The percentage of young people not in education, employment or training has decreased, and that is reflected, I think, mainly in the fact that more 16 year olds are staying on in education, rather than leaving school, and going into unemployment, as it were. So, there are quite a few indicators that indicate a trend for improvement.

[17] The other positive thing—. I see the literacy and numeracy framework as a very important instrument for change and improvement, because literacy and numeracy are fundamental across the curriculum. And I think we are seeing signs of improvement. We are seeing signs of improvement in reading, in writing—we've been complaining about the standards of writing for a few years, but this year we can say that writing is better, and, especially, in the foundation phase, where there were concerns. I think that the standards in secondary schools this year—. I know, statistically, it's difficult to compare around 35 schools in one year with 35 schools in another year. The numbers are low, but, clearly, none went into special measures, and, if you read the section on secondary schools, you will see that we say quite clearly that there's been a trend of improvement in outcomes in these schools over the last few years. I looked back at the same set of schools in the last cycle, and they did not demonstrate a change from the previous year—they were roughly the same. The cut then was about 70% 'good', or better, and 30% below the quality threshold. Clearly, in this cycle, we have set higher expectations, but, what we have seen is, last year, fewer than half of secondary schools were 'good' or better; this year, it is over half. And, of course, we don't have that number—last year, six required special measures; this year, none did. So, I think, in those schools, we have seen improvements.

[18] **Angela Burns:** Thank you for that. You're absolutely right. To have over 50% of our secondary schools doing better is an absolute tick in the box, but, of course, the flipside of that coin is there's still a substantial number that aren't. In the report, the more detailed bit on primary schools, you talk about the, I think, two thirds of primary schools that will need a follow-up visit. So, this must impact on your capacity going forward—and forgive me, Members, if I'm walking on anybody else's questions here—to monitor these standards. Does that mean that you'll be able to monitor fewer new schools, and, therefore, check that the standards are there, because you're having to revisit the older ones?

[19] **Ms Keane:** It's true that we didn't plan for following up in two thirds of schools; we planned for following up in around a third of schools. But we have, through efficiencies,

managed that, and we can still manage that, just about. We're coming to break even in our budget, and we have seen reductions in our budgets over the years. We used to have an underspend, but next year we do not expect to have any underspend.

[20] So, originally, we cut down the size of the core inspections in order to free up time to deploy our resources in a more proportionate way, i.e. spend more of our resources on the low-performing schools, and we have been able to do that. Of course, the follow-up is not equally demanding in all Welsh schools. Some good schools go into follow-up, but the aspects on which we need to check whether they've done things are relatively minor, and so the demands on us are not so great as, say, in a school in special measures, where we monitor on a termly basis.

[21] **Ann Jones:** Keith.

[22] **Keith Davies:** Gwnaf i ofyn yn Gymraeg. Fel cyn-athro mathemateg, roeddwn i'n synnu i weld, pan oeddech chi'n sôn am rifedd—. Rŷch chi'n sôn fan hyn, mewn rhyw hanner o ysgolion, nad yw plant yn gwneud yn ddigon da, a'r rheswm rŷch chi'n doddi yna yw bod yr athrawon ddim yn ddigon da. Beth allwn ni ei wneud am hynny, 'te?,

Keith Davies: I'll ask my questions in Welsh. As a former mathematics teacher, I was surprised to see, when you were discussing numeracy—. You mention here that, in about half of schools, children are not doing well enough, and the reason you give for that is that the teachers aren't good enough. What can we do about that then?

[23] **Ms Keane:** Rydym ni'n dweud dau beth, rwy'n credu. Rydym ni yn dweud bod yna fylchau yng ngwybodaeth yr athrawon mathemateg, ond wrth edrych ar rifedd, rydym ni'n edrych ar y defnydd o fathemateg yng ngwersi pynciau eraill.

Ms Keane: We are saying two things, I think. We do say that there are gaps in the knowledge of the maths teachers, but in looking at numeracy, we are looking at the use of maths in the lessons for other subjects.

[24] **Keith Davies:** Rwy'n derbyn hynny.

Keith Davies: I accept that.

[25] **Ms Keane:** Felly, dyweder mewn gwyddoniaeth neu mewn daearyddiaeth neu ddylunio a thechnoleg, mae yna adegau pan fydd disgyblion angen defnyddio mathemateg, a bydd angen i'r athrawon hynny fod yn gymwys i fedru eu cynnal nhw wrth eu helpu nhw i ddefnyddio mathemateg. Felly, mae yna ddiffyg gwybodaeth ymhlith rhai athrawon mewn pynciau eraill, lle mae mathemateg yn bwysig. Ond hefyd rydym ni yn dweud, ac rydym ni wedi dweud mewn adroddiadau eraill, mwy cyffredinol ar fathemateg, fod yna fylchau yng ngwybodaeth rhai athrawon sydd yn dysgu mathemateg.

Ms Keane: So, in science, say, or in geography or design and technology, there will be occasions when pupils will need to use maths, and those teachers need to be competent to support those pupils in while helping them to use maths. So, there is a lack of knowledge amongst some of the teachers of other subjects, where maths is important. But what we are also saying, and what we have said in other, more general reports on maths, is that there are gaps in the knowledge of some teachers who do teach maths.

[26] Er enghraifft, mewn rhai ysgolion cynradd lle mae mathemateg yn wan, efallai fydd yr athro dosbarth yn dilyn cwrs o lyfrau gosod mathemateg, a bydd yr holl ddsbarth yn cael mynd trwy'r llyfr, er efallai fod rhai o'r plant ddim yn deall. Mae yna ddiffyg

For example, in some primary schools where maths is weak, maybe the classroom teacher will follow a course of set texts on maths, and the whole class will go through the book, even though some of the children maybe don't understand. There is a failing there,

fanna, efallai, yn nealltwriaeth yr athro ei hun o anghenion y plant yna, a hefyd os yw'r plant yna'n cael eu hesgeuluso, yna gallan nhw symud ymlaen i'r flwyddyn nesaf heb ddeall yn llwyr y gwaith yr oedden nhw i fod i'w wneud yn y dosbarth yna. Felly, mae angen cryfhau gwybodaeth a hyder athrawon cynradd mewn mathemateg.

[27] **Keith Davies:** Yn nes ymlaen yn eich adroddiad, rydych chi'n sôn am ddiffyg disgyblion yn dilyn cyrsiau gwyddonol a mathemateg, ac wedyn bydd llai a llai o'r rheini ar gael i fynd i ddysgu.

[28] **Ms Keane:** Bydd, ac rydym ni'n dweud bod llai—. Rydym ni'n poeni hefyd fod mwy o blant yn cymryd lefel 2 cwrs galwedigaethol mewn gwyddoniaeth yng nghyfnod allweddol 4, yn hytrach na chymryd TGAU, felly mae yna sawl pryder yn codi ynglŷn â hynny. Nid ydym ni'n gweld y niferoedd yn cynyddu o ran plant yn mynd drwyddo i wneud lefel A mewn pynciau mathemateg a gwyddoniaeth chwaith. Felly, mae yna resymau—

9:45

[29] **Keith Davies:** Byddaf i'n dod nôl am gyfnod allweddol 4 ar ôl 16 yn nes ymlaen, achos mae cwpl o gwestiynau gyda fi yn fanna hefyd. Diolch.

[30] **Ann Jones:** Well, you might not have had one bite. Simon.

[31] **Simon Thomas:** Jest eisiau dilyn y pwynt yna, achos roeddwn i wedi gweld tystiolaeth yn rhywle arall ynglŷn â'r nifer isel sydd gyda ni yng Nghymru o athrawon sydd wedi cymhwyso mewn gwyddoniaeth a mathemateg sydd wedyn yn hyfforddi fel athrawon. Mae gyda ni ganran is na gweddill Prydain, yn enwedig mewn ysgolion cynradd, lle mae'n isel iawn, iawn: o dan 5%. Nid oedd yn glir yn yr adroddiad—hynny yw, nid ydych chi o reidrwydd yn dilyn hynny—ond mae'n ymhlyg yn yr hyn rŷch chi newydd ei ddweud bod yna efallai athrawon sydd ddim yn gymwys neu sydd ddim yn hyderus iawn yn iwsio sgiliau mathemategol a gwyddonol, a bod hynny'n adlewyrchu wedyn yn y disgyblion. Efallai fod disgyblion yn dewis rhywbeth mwy rhwydd neu llai heriol iddyn

maybe, in the teacher's understanding of the needs of those children, and also if those children are neglected then maybe they could move on to the next year without understanding fully the work that they were supposed to do in that class. So, there's a need to strengthen the knowledge and confidence of primary maths teachers.

Keith Davies: Later on in your report, you talk about the shortage of students studying science and mathematical courses, and then there will be fewer and fewer of those available to go on to teach.

Ms Keane: Yes, and we do say that there are fewer—. We are also concerned about the fact that more and more children are taking a level 2 vocational course in science during key stage 4 as opposed to taking a GCSE, so there are several concerns arising from that. We don't see the numbers increasing in terms of the children going on to do A-levels in maths and science subjects either. So, there are reasons—

Keith Davies: I'll be coming back to key stage 4 and post-16 later, because I've got a few questions there, too. Thank you.

Simon Thomas: I just wanted to follow up on that point, because I had seen evidence from elsewhere about the low number that we have in Wales of teachers who qualified in science and maths and who then go on to train as teachers. We have a lower percentage than the rest of the UK, particularly in primary schools, where it's very, very low: under 5%. It wasn't clear in the report—that is, you don't necessarily follow that up—but it is implicit in what you've just said that there may be teachers who are not qualified or who are not very confident using mathematical and scientific skills, and that that is reflected then in the pupils. Pupils will perhaps choose something easier or less challenging for them, and we do not reach the standards as a result of that. In your report—

nhw, ac nid ym ni'n cyrraedd y safonau oherwydd hynny. Yn yr adroddiad—wel, mewn ffordd rwy'n gofyn dros y pum mlynedd diwethaf hefyd—a ydych chi wedi gweld y tueddiad hwnnw? A ydy hwn yn bryder i chi ynglŷn â datblygu y sgiliau hynny yn y tymor hir yng Nghymru, yn enwedig o gofio bod angen y tair gwyddoniaeth os ych chi eisiau gwneud meddygaeth a phynciau eraill sy'n dechrau ymddangos fel bod eu hangen o bwys i fywyd y wlad?

[32] **Ms Keane:** Rydym ni wedi cynhyrchu adroddiad a chylch gorchwyl ar wyddoniaeth mewn ysgolion uwchradd, wrth gwrs, ac wedi adnabod yn yr adroddiad hwnnw ddiffygion datblygiad proffesiynol ar gyfer yr athrawon mathemateg, a hefyd y ffaith bod yna brinder athrawon ffiseg, a chemeg i raddau, ac wedyn bod athrawon bywydeg, gan fod mwy ohonyn nhw, yn dysgu pynciau gwyddonol nad ydyn nhw efallai ddim yn ddigon hyderus ynglŷn â nhw. Gall Meilyr—dyma'r gwyddonydd yn y tîm—ychwanegu at hwn.

[33] **Mr Rowlands:** Roeddwn i am ddweud bod yna ryw beth diwylliannol, onid oes? Mae'n fwy derbyniol i ddweud 'O, dwi ddim yn gwneud mathemateg'. Rŷch chi'n clywed oedolion gyda llythrennedd da yn dweud y math yna o beth. Felly, mae yna ryw gylch dieflig fel bod yna lai o bobl yn mynd i mewn i'w wneud e yn y chweched dosbarth, a llai yn ei wneud e yn y brifysgol, ac yn y blaen. Mae'r broblem yn bodoli.

[34] Nid yw ond yn bodoli yng Nghymru. Roeddwn i'n cael sgwrs debyg â phrif arolygydd Iwerddon yn ddiweddar. Maen nhw, wrth gwrs, yn wlad sydd wedi rhoi lot o sylw i fathemateg a gwyddoniaeth, ond maen nhw'n dal i deimlo bod yna broblem gyda nhw yn fanna.

[35] Yn sicr, mae yna broblem. Mae wedi cael ei hadnabod. Un o'r pethau sydd wedi digwydd, er enghraifft, yw'r disgwyl bod athrawon sydd newydd eu cymhwyso pan fyddan nhw'n mynd i mewn i'r brifysgol i hyfforddi, fod yn rhaid iddyn nhw gael o leiaf 'B' mewn mathemateg nawr. Felly, mae hwnnw'n un cam.

well, in a way, I'm asking about the past five years, as well—have you noticed that trend? Has this caused you any concerns in terms of the long-term development of those skills in Wales, particularly bearing in mind that you need to have the three sciences if you want to study medicine and the other subjects that are starting to appear as though they are seriously required for the life of the nation?

Ms Keane: We have produced a report and terms of reference on science in secondary schools, of course, and we have identified in that report deficiencies in terms of the continuing professional development available for maths teachers, and also that there is a shortage of physics teachers, and chemistry teachers to an extent, and that biology teachers then, as there are more of them, teach scientific subjects that they're perhaps not confident enough in. Meilyr is the scientist in the team, so maybe he can add to that.

Mr Rowlands: I wanted to say that there's a cultural issue here, isn't there? It's more acceptable to say, 'Oh, I don't do mathematics'. You hear adults who have good literacy skills saying that sort of thing. So, there's some sort of vicious cycle going on here so that fewer people go in to study it in the sixth form, and therefore fewer people are studying it in university, and so on. The problem does exist.

It's not just a problem in Wales. I was having a similar discussion with the chief inspector in Ireland recently. They, of course, are a country that has focused a great deal of attention on maths and science, but they still feel that they have a problem there.

Certainly, there is a problem. It's been acknowledged. One of the things that has happened, for example, is this expectation that newly qualified teachers, when they go into university to train, will need to have at least a 'B' grade in mathematics now. So, that's one step.

[36] **Simon Thomas:** Rwyf wedi cael ychydig o gŵynion am hynny, mae'n rhaid imi ddweud, ond rwy'n deall y pwynt yn iawn. [*Chwerthin.*]

Simon Thomas: I've had a few complaints about that, I have to say, but I understand the point perfectly. [*Laughter.*]

[37] **Mr Rowlands:** Roeddwn i'n mynd i ddweud. Yr adborth rŷm ni'n ei gael yw ei bod yn fwy anodd, wrth gwrs, i recriwtio oherwydd hynny. Felly, nid oes ateb hawdd i hyn. Ond, yn sicr, fel roedd Ann yn dweud, mae'r fframwaith rhifedd yn gosod fframwaith i bobl o ran beth yw'r disgwyliadau i'r disgyblion, ond hefyd beth yw'r disgwyliadau i'r athrawon. Bydd yn rhaid inni barhau i roi mwy a mwy o arweiniad, nid yn unig i'r athrawon arbenigol, ond i athrawon ar draws yr ystod o bynciau. A, hefyd, efallai, hyfforddiant. Nid ydym wedi gweld efallai ddigon o hyn, sef hyfforddiant pwnc penodol, felly sut ŷch chi'n defnyddio rhifedd mewn daearyddiaeth neu rywbeth felly i'r athrawon daearyddiaeth.

Mr Rowlands: I was going to say. The feedback that we get is that it's more difficult, of course, to recruit because of that. So, there's no easy answer to this. However, certainly, as Ann was saying, the numeracy framework sets a framework for people as regards what the expectations are for the pupils, but also what the expectations are for the teachers. We'll have to continue to provide more and more guidance, not just for the specialist teachers but also for teachers across the range of subjects. And also, perhaps, training. We may not have seen enough of this, namely subject-specific training, so you could use numeracy in geography, or something like that for the geography teachers.

[38] **Ms Keane:** Mae yna ddigonedd o athrawon mathemateg da yng Nghymru. Fe welsom ni yn y gynhadledd yn ddiweddar a oedd wedi ei hanelu at athrawon mathemateg fod yna gyfoeth o arbenigedd gyda ni. Rwy'n credu hefyd fod CBAC a'r consortia wedi mynd ati i baratoi athrawon mathemateg ar gyfer y cyrsiau TGAU newydd, ac rwy'n gweld y bydd hwnnw o help. Felly, mae yna ddau arf gyda ni fan hyn: un ohonyn nhw yw'r fframwaith llythrennedd a rhifedd, a'r llall yw'r cyrsiau TGAU newydd mewn iaith a mathemateg. Rwy'n credu bod rheini a'r hyfforddiant sydd ynghlwm wrth y ddau beth yna yn mynd i fod yn gaffaeliad o ran cryfhau mathemateg ac iaith.

Ms Keane: There are plenty of good maths teachers in Wales. We saw in the conference held recently that was aimed at maths teachers that we do have a wealth of expertise here. I also think that the WJEC and the consortia have been preparing maths teachers for the new GCSE syllabus, and I think that that will be a help. So, we have two tools available to us here: one of them is the literacy and numeracy framework, and the other is the new GCSE courses in language and maths. I believe that those things and the training that ties in with both those things will be a real boon for us in terms of strengthening maths and languages.

[39] **Mr Rowlands:** Ie, a rhywbeth diwylliannol yw e, sef bod rhaid derbyn nad yw e'n dderbyniol mwyach i bobl ddim medru bod yn hollol rhugl yn eu rhifedd. Dyna'r math o sgiliau sydd eu hangen arnom ni yn y dyfodol.

Mr Rowlands: Yes, and it's a cultural issue in that we have to accept that it's no longer acceptable for people not to be totally conversant in numeracy skills, because those are the kind of skills that we need for the future.

[40] **Ann Jones:** Aled, you want to come in, but we're still on the very first set of questions, so can you—

[41] **Aled Roberts:** Rwy'n meddwl beth sy'n anodd i ni ei ddeall yw eich bod chi'n dweud nad jest problem yng Nghymru ydy hyn, ond bod y broblem yn llawer iawn gwaeth yng Nghymru o ran y

Aled Roberts: I think that what's difficult for us to understand is that you say that this is not just a problem specific to Wales, but then you say that the problem is much worse in Wales in terms of the sciences than it is in

gwyddoniaethau nag ydyw yn yr Alban, Iwerddon a hyd yn oed Lloegr, er bod Lloegr yn agosach atom ni. A oes gennych chi unrhyw ddealltwriaeth o hynny? Mae yna gyrsiau—roeddech chi'n sôn am gyrsiau pwnc arbenigol—ac yn Lloegr mae yna gyrsiau SKE o ran datblygiad proffesiynol. Nid oes yna ddim o'r fath gyrsiau yng Nghymru o gwbl. Pam mae'r penderfyniad hwnnw wedi cael ei gymryd gan addysgwyr yng Nghymru?

[42] **Ms Keane:** Rwy'n credu beth sydd wedi digwydd yw ein bod ni wedi trosglwyddo o system lle oedd gan yr awdurdodau lleol dimau o ymgynghorwyr ym mhob pwnc yn y cwricwlwm. Rŷm ni wedi symud o'r system yna i sefydlu consortia sydd â'r prif bwrpas o godi safonau wrth osod targedau cynhyrchu, cynlluniau gweithredu, gwella safonau, gan edrych ar draws yr ysgol. Mae hynny'n dda o beth, ac nid wy'n feirniadol o hynny o gwbl, ond wrth wneud hynny, rŷm ni wedi newid ffocws y timau ymgynghorol hynny, a nawr maen nhw'n gwneud job wahanol bellach. Rydym wedi colli rhywfaint. I raddau, mae hynny'n cael ei adlewyrchu nawr yn y diffyg hyfforddiant lleol ar gyfer gwyddoniaeth ac ar gyfer mathemateg. Beth sydd ei angen yw bod y consortia, fel maen nhw'n dod i adnabod yr ysgolion yn well, yn adnabod ble mae'r canolfannau rhagoriaeth—oherwydd mae yna athrawon da iawn gyda ni yn y system—a ble mae'r ysgolion lle mae'r bylchau, ac mae angen *choreography* i roi'r rheini at ei gilydd i greu'r is-adeiledd sy'n mynd i helpu'r athrawon sydd heb yr hyder i wella. Dyna beth sydd ei angen, a dyna beth sydd ei angen ar lawr Cymru, ar lawr gwlad. Mae'r consortia wedi dod, neu maen nhw'n aeddfedu—efallai fydd cwestiwn yn dod am y rheini yn nes ymlaen, felly af i ddim ar ôl y consortia ar hyn o bryd.

Scotland, Ireland and in England, even though England is closer to us. Do you have any understanding of why that is? There are courses—you were talking about the specialist subject courses—and in England, they have the SKE courses in terms of professional development. There aren't any of those kinds of courses in Wales. Why was that decision taken by educators in Wales?

Ms Keane: I think that what's happened is that we've transferred from a system where the local authorities had teams of consultants in every subject of the curriculum. We've moved from that system to establishing consortia with the chief aim of raising standards, by setting production targets, action plans, plans to improve standards, looking across the school. That is a good thing, and I'm not critical of that at all, but by doing that, we've changed the focus of those advisory teams, and now they're doing a different job. We've lost something. To an extent, that is reflected now in the lack of local training in the sciences and mathematics. What we need is for the consortia, as they get to know the schools better, to get to know where the centres of excellence are—because we have very good teachers within the system—and where the schools with the gaps are, and some choreography is needed to bring those two things together to create the infrastructure that will help the teachers who are lacking in confidence to improve. That is what is needed, and that's what is needed throughout Wales, on the ground. The consortia have come along, or they have started maturing—well, there may be questions about them later on, so I won't go after the consortia at the moment.

[43] **Ann Jones:** Okay, thank you. We're still on the first set and, looking at this, we could be here until a week next Wednesday if we don't carry on, so, Angela, do you want to make some more progress?

[44] **Angela Burns:** I just actually wanted to ask a question about the rigour of the inspections and the veracity of them. I was in a couple of schools last week, one of which is about to have an Ofsted inspection and it was like a whirlwind—not Ofsted, sorry, Estyn; an Estyn inspection.

[45] **Ms Keane:** I'm glad they're not having an Ofsted inspection. [*Laughter.*]

[46] **Angela Burns:** They're nowhere near the borders. I've been, of course, in other schools where they're about to have an inspection, and it's a bit like in the old days, when I used to work for supermarkets, and we'd line up everything and polish and spit until everything gleamed. So, do you see or anticipate a further tightening up of the inspection process? Do you think that it needs to be any tougher than it is? Do you think it needs to explore any other areas? Because of the trends that you're identifying over these years, do you think that there are perhaps, as I say, other areas that so far haven't ever really been looked at in any depth? How confident are you, when you go to a school, that actually what you see is what that school is really like? I know some inspections may not come back for a number of years, and do you have any sense that anybody's sort of putting on a show and that things will perhaps be regressive after you've gone? That step-change that you made in the inspection process three or four years ago, I think was really valid and valuable, and it really has sort of shown us exactly where we are, but is there more we ought to be doing in terms of that whole process? Sorry, that's such a long question.

[47] **Ms Keane:** Thanks for that. There was a time, before the cycle started, when I knew more than anyone what it should look like. I worked, of course, with Meilyr and Simon, so they were working fully alongside me in that process, I have to say. It wasn't something I just thought up on my own. I could only have done it with support from people working in Estyn. But very quickly, as the cycle progressed and people were actually out in the field doing the inspections, they came to know more about it than I did. And then, of course, we instigate a monitoring system. We instigate a series of reports so that we can check on things and quality assure and make sure that the standard is high. I am totally confident that Estyn can continue in that vein in future, because the systems are well established and the inspectors are well trained.

[48] I think it's a rigorous system. I think there's a danger in being so rigorous that you are perceived as being some kind of—bringing retribution and fear upon teachers and schools. I think an inspection system has to reflect the state of education. As schools improve—and, I'm reasonably optimistic that they are improving now and will continue to improve—then the inspection system should become more proportionate.

[49] You asked whether we should be looking at other things. Well, I certainly think that, we are now in year 5 of the inspection cycle and it generally takes six years, we have focused on literacy and numeracy, on Welsh and looked more generally across the curriculum. We haven't looked at other subjects in any depth. Perhaps there will come a time when, certainly, it needs to be refreshed, and we need to start looking at other things.

[50] There is a sense in which, once schools become very familiar with how we operate, they become also more adept at presenting themselves in terms of our expectations. And, of course, we need to refresh our system, simply because we need to take a fresh look at the way we do things and, indeed, to look at new things. So, I do not believe that this current system is so wonderful it should go on ad infinitum—no. It will need to change and it will need to change as schools change, because it will need to reflect—. I believe that, in 2010, we needed to look harder at literacy and numeracy and I think that that has borne fruit. We have got now the framework, we have got new GCSEs and I am absolutely confident that that is what we needed to do to strengthen literacy and numeracy in our schools. Once that has been done, we will move on and then it will be time to look at other things.

[51] **Ann Jones:** Simon, you've got a small point.

[52] **Simon Thomas:** I don't know if it's small, Chair. [*Laughter.*]

[53] **Ann Jones:** Well, you know, we're half way—

[54] **Simon Thomas:** It's a small question, but it might be a big point.

[55] Os caf i, dyma gyfle i finnau roi ar gofnod hefyd, fy niolchiadau i chi a'ch cydweithwyr am y gwaith yn ystod y pum mlynedd diwethaf. Mae wedi cyfoethogi dealltwriaeth pawb, rwy'n meddwl, o beth sy'n digwydd y tu fewn i'r gyfundrefn addysg ac ysgolion a cholegau yng Nghymru.

If I may, this is an opportunity for me to put on record my thanks to you and your colleagues for the work that you've done in the last five years. It has enriched the understanding of everyone, I think, in terms of what's happening within the education system and schools and colleges in Wales.

[56] Ond, y cwestiwn sy'n deillio o'r pwyntiau rydych chi newydd eu gwneud yw, mewn ffordd, gofyn beth yw'r fframwaith yna ar gyfer y pum mlynedd nesaf. Achos, mae'n ymddangos i fi bod yna, nid tyndra, o reidrwydd, ond mae yna ddwy ffrwd waith tra phwysig gennych chi yn Estyn, sy'n digwydd ar hyn o bryd. Mae'r arolygon ysgolion rydych chi newydd sôn amdanynt, ond mae'ch gwaith thematig chi hefyd, sydd o bwys o mawr—codi arfer da a cheisio rhannu'r arfer da yna ymysg y proffesiwn dysgu. Wrth gwrs, mae'r ffocws, ers i adroddiad y Sefydliad ar gyfer Cydweithrediad a Datblygiad Economaidd gael ei gyhoeddi, hefyd wedi troi at fwy o'r hunanddysgu a hunanarfarnu yma a rhannu'r arfer da. A ydy hynny'n golygu y bydd angen arolygu, yn ystod y pum mlynedd nesaf, mewn ffordd wahanol, yn hytrach na fesul ysgol, ac yn hytrach yn cryfhau'r arolygu themâu, ac arolygu'r proffesiwn fel proffesiwn sy'n hunanddysgu, er enghraifft, a hunanarfarnu? A ydych chi'n rhagweld y bydd y prif arolygydd newydd yn gorfod edrych ar bethau fel yna?

But the question that stems from the points that you made is, in a way, asking what that framework is for the next five years. Because, it seems to me that, it's not tension necessarily, but there are two very important work streams that you have in Estyn, which are happening at present. There are the school inspections, which you just mentioned, but there's also your thematic work, which is very important—identifying good practice and sharing it among the teaching profession. Of course, the focus, since the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development report was published, has also turned more towards self-evaluation and this self-appraisal and sharing good practice. Does that mean that we will need to inspect, in the next five years, in a different way rather than on a school-by-school basis, strengthening the thematic inspections, and inspect the profession, as a profession that self-teaches, for example and self-appraises? Do you foresee that the new chief inspector will have to look at that kind of thing?

[57] **Ms Keane:** Rwy'n credu bydd angen edrych ar sut i amrywio'r modelau er mwyn iddynt fod yn hyblyg i gwrdd â sefyllfaoedd newydd. Yn bersonol, rwy'n gredwr mawr mewn arolygu ysgolion a cholegau unigol.

Ms Keane: I think that there will be a need to look at how to vary the models, so that they are flexible to meet new situations. Personally, I'm a great believer in inspecting schools and colleges on an individual basis.

[58] Beth sy'n digwydd pan fyddwch chi'n ysgrifennu adroddiad ar, dyweder, fathemateg yng nghyfnod allweddol 3 yw, rydych chi'n mynd i nifer o ysgolion ac yn dweud, 'Wel, yn hyn a hyn o ysgolion, mae pethau'n eithaf da; mae yna ragoriaeth fan hyn; mae yna lot o bethau anfoddfaol fan hyn'. Nid ydych yn cael sefyllfa lle mae'r ysgolion yna sydd yn anfoddfaol yn dweud, 'O reit, mae'n rhaid i ni wella nawr'. Na, maen nhw, efallai, yn fwy parod i bwyntio'r

What happens when you write a report on, say, mathematics in key stage 3 is, you visit many schools and you say, 'Well, in such and such schools, things are quite good; there is excellence here; there are a lot of unsatisfactory things here'. You don't have a situation where the unsatisfactory schools will say, 'Oh, right. We have to improve now'. No, they're more willing, perhaps, to point the finger at others and say, 'No, it wasn't our school that was unsatisfactory'.

bys at y lleill a dweud, 'Na, nid ein hysgol ni oedd yn anfoddfaol'.

10:00

[59] Pan fyddwch chi'n arolygu ysgol unigol, mae'r cyfrifoldeb ar yr ysgol yna, ac rwy'n gredwr mawr yn hynny. Yn bersonol, rwyf yn credo hynny, achos rydych yn dal pobl i gyfrif—y bobl sy'n arwain yr ysgol honno. Mae'n rhy hawdd mewn arolwg sy'n edrych ar rywbeth sy'n digwydd ar draws awdurdod neu ar draws ardal neu ar draws nifer o ysgolion, i'r ysgol ddweud, 'Ie, ond nid y ni sy'n anfoddfaol yn y system honno; rhywun arall sy'n anfoddfaol'. Mae'n rhaid dal pobl i gyfrif mewn ffordd uniongyrchol. Nid wyf yn amau na ellir creu sefyllfa eto lle mae llai o bwysau ar yr ysgolion sy'n perfformio'n dda iawn. Mae hynny'n fater i'r prif arolygydd nesaf i'w drafod. [*Chwerthin.*] Wel, mae e; nid fi fydd yn ei wneud e.

When you inspect a single school, the responsibility is on that school, and I'm a great believer in that. Personally, I believe that, because you are holding people to account—the people leading that particular school. It is too easy in an inspection that looks at something that is happening across an authority, across a region or across a number of schools, for the school to say, 'Yes, but it's not us who is unsatisfactory in that system; it is someone else who is unsatisfactory'. So we have to hold people directly to account. I don't doubt that we can create a situation in the future where there will be less pressure on the schools that perform very well. That is a matter for the next chief inspector to discuss. [*Laughter.*] Well, it is; I'm not the one who'll be doing it.

[60] **Simon Thomas:** Rydych yn sôn am rywbeth sy'n adlewyrchu'r risg yn y system.

Simon Thomas: You are talking about something that reflects the risk in the system.

[61] **Ms Keane:** Ydw.

Ms Keane: Yes.

[62] **Simon Thomas:** Ac sy'n parchu, efallai, a yw'r system wedi gwella ei ffordd o hunanarfarnu hefyd, ie?

Simon Thomas: And also respects, perhaps, whether the system has improved in the matter of self-evaluation, yes?

[63] **Ms Keane:** Yn Lloegr, yr Alban ac yn Iwerddon, mae systemau o ymweliadau mwy ysgafn. Rydym ni'n rhoi'r un profiad o arolygiad craidd i bawb, ac yna rydym yn treulio mwy o amser yn y rhai sy'n tangyflawni. Ond, mewn rhai gwledydd eraill—. Rydym ni wedi gwneud hwn mewn cylch o'r blaen, lle rydym yn mynd yn ôl risg ac yn dweud, 'Reit, rydych yn mynd i gael cyffyrddiad mwy ysgafn', fel maen nhw'n ei ddweud, sef *light touch*, yn hytrach na roi'r profiad craidd. Efallai yn wir mai fel yna y bydd y model yn y dyfodol, pwy a wŷr? Ond, mae'r arolygiad craidd yn reit dynn fel y mae. Mae e mor dynn ag y gall fod os yw e i fod yn drwyadl.

Ms Keane: In England, Scotland and Ireland, there are systems of more light-touch visits. We give the same experience of core inspections to everyone, and then we spend more time with those who are underperforming. But, in some other countries—. We have done this in a previous cycle, where we go according to risk, and we say, 'Right, you're going to have a more light-touch approach', as they say, rather than giving the core experience. Perhaps that will be the model in the future, who knows? But, the core inspection is quite tight as it is. It is as tight as it can be if it's going to be thorough.

[64] **Ann Jones:** Go on then, Aled, but we're eating into time.

[65] **Aled Roberts:** Roeddwn i jest eisiau gofyn cwestiwn i chi ar yr hunanarfarnu yma, oherwydd mae eich adroddiad chi yn nodi

Aled Roberts: I just want to ask you a question on the self-evaluation, because your report notes a few weaknesses in terms of the

rhai gwendidau o fewn y gyfundrefn hefyd. Mae sôn am y ffaith bod yna adroddiadau arolygu yn dal i ddweud nad yw asesiadau athrawon mewn ysgolion bob amser yn ddigon cadarn a bod hynny yn rhoi adlewyrchiad ffals. Hefyd, rydych yn sôn am y sefyllfa lle rydym ni rŵan yn symud i brofion a lle mae perygl bod ysgolion yn dysgu'r profion yn hytrach na chreu sefyllfa lle mae'r canlyniadau yn adlewyrchiad teg o'r safon sydd wedi cael ei gyrraedd o fewn yr ysgol. A oes gennych chi unrhyw sylw ar, hwyrach, y gwendidau hynny a sut rydym yn mynd i oresgyn y sefyllfa sydd wedi cael ei chreu? Rwy'n derbyn bod rhan o hynny oherwydd polisi gwleidyddol, ond sut ydym yn creu aeddfedrwydd o fewn y system lle mae yna hwyrach mwy o baroddrwydd ymysg y proffesiwn i fod yn hollol onest ynglŷn â'r sefyllfa?

[66] **Ms Keane:** Rwy'n credu, pan gyflwynwyd profion, roedd angen rhywbeth i roi dealltwriaeth o ble oedd y safonau ac i helpu athrawon i gynllunio er mwyn gwella. Nid wyf, efallai, yn cytuno bod angen i'r profion i gario ymlaen am byth, ond rwy'n credu, ar yr adeg pan gychwynwyd y profion, yr oedd angen rhywbeth. Rydym wedi gweld asesiadau athrawon ar ddiwedd cyfnodau allweddol yn mynd yn llai dibynadwy. Er enghraifft, os edrychwch yn ôl ar y pum mlynedd diwethaf, mae'r dangosydd pwnc craidd, sef y ganran sy'n ennill yn y pynciau craidd y lefel ddisgwyliedig, wedi codi yng nghyfnod allweddol 3 gan 17 pwynt canran. Mae hynny'n godiad enfawr. Mae wedi codi wyth pwynt canran ar ddiwedd cyfnod allweddol 2. Felly, mae tynnu at 90% o blant yn cyrraedd y lefel ddisgwyliedig, ac mae hynny pan mae gennym ni bron chwarter ein plant ni ag anghenion arbennig ac yn derbyn sylw oherwydd eu bod nhw wedi cael eu hadnabod ag anghenion arbennig. Nid ydym ni'n gweld y safonau yma yn gwella cystal yn ein harolygiadau â'r hyn y mae'r canlyniadau yn dangos. Felly, mae diffyg *match* yna rhwng yr hyn rydym ni'n ei weld pan fyddwn yn arolygu a'r hyn sy'n dod mewn asesiadau athrawon ar ddiwedd cyfnodau allweddol. Ond, roeddwn yn gweld yn *Dysg* ddoe bod bwriad nawr i gryfhau'r ffordd y mae safoni yn digwydd ar yr asesiadau hynny. Ond, ar hyn o bryd, at ei gilydd, nid ydynt yn

system. There is discussion of the fact that inspection reports are still saying that teacher assessments in schools are not robust enough every time and that that gives a false impression. You also talk about the situation where we are presently moving towards tests and that there is a risk that schools will teach to those tests, rather than creating a situation where the results are a fair reflection of the standard that has been reached within the school. Do you have any comments, perhaps, on those weaknesses and how we can overcome the situation that has been created? I accept that some of this is because of political policies, but how do we create a maturity in the system, where perhaps there is more readiness amongst the profession to be completely honest about the situation?

Ms Keane: I think that, when the tests were introduced, there was a need for something to give an understanding of where the standards were and to help teachers to plan to improve. I don't, perhaps, agree that we need the tests to carry on for ever, but, at the time when the tests were started, something was needed. We have seen the teacher assessments at the end of key stages becoming less reliable. For example, if you look back at the last five years, the core subject indicator, namely the percentage that achieves the expected level in the core subjects, has risen in key stage 3 by 17 percentage points. That's a huge increase. It has risen eight percentage points at the end of key stage 2. So, nearly 90% of children receive the expected level, and that is when we have nearly a quarter of our children with special needs and receiving attention because they've been identified as having special needs. We don't see these standards improving as much in our inspections as is being shown in the results, so there's a mismatch there between what we see when we inspect and what comes out of teacher assessments at the end of key stages. But, I saw yesterday in *Dysg* that there is an intention now to strengthen the way in which standardisation happens in terms of those assessments. But, at present, all in all, they're not reliable.

ddibynadwy.

[67] **Ann Jones:** Angela, we're still on the first section, but I'm sure this is going to be your last question.

[68] **Angela Burns:** Oh, Chair, I've taken that hint, totally. It is my last question because it actually feeds off the question you've given, or the answer you've given to Aled. You talk about the assessments, but when you're doing the inspections, is there any—? And I know you go around, you identify best practice and you look at, in primary, in secondary and all the other settings, what makes a good teacher, what makes an outstanding school, and we're trying to spread that around Wales, absolutely. Do you ever have a temptation, or is there a view that there should be a uniform style, a uniform methodology, uniform pedagogy that everybody has to follow? Or are you a believer in it being different horses for courses and different schools need to react to their—. Because one of the feedbacks that I sometimes get is that people feel that they're being judged on not what they teach but how they teach it, and I just wondered if you could have a view on that.

[69] **Ms Keane:** I think there are some well understood models of pedagogy that work well. I don't think there is a single model of pedagogy that works well in all circumstances for all children at all ages, and that's why it's so difficult to say that there is a uniform pedagogy, but I think we know, too, that there are pedagogies that don't work well—that is, the thoughtless following of commercial schemes of work without concern for the individual needs of different children in the class, without differentiation, where they're dragged willy-nilly through, say, a book 6 in mathematics. At the end of the year, some of them will have got to the end of book 6 and some of them move on to book 7 having not understood what's in book 6, because the pedagogy has merely been a desktop following of a commercial scheme.

[70] The overuse of worksheets—you know, the mindless overuse of worksheets. We know the features of poor pedagogy, we know the features of good pedagogy: differentiation; grouping children according to the level of need and ability; varying the quality and the kind of work they do, albeit on the same or similar tasks. So, there are lots of features of good pedagogy that people are familiar with. Knowing that does not quite make it possible, then, to say that everyone in year 2 should be teaching reading in this way, exactly in this way. Sometimes, children will need phonics right up into key stage 2. Sometimes, the reading is so good and children are so familiar with books and their language is so rich when they enter schools that the teacher's job is made much easier, and they learn to read almost magically without repetitive drilling in terms of phonics and so on. So, it does depend—it is horses for courses, I think. But, I think enough is known about good pedagogy to help all teachers, to make sure that we don't see too many of those worksheets, too much use of those commercial schemes.

[71] **Angela Burns:** Okay, yes that comes across very clearly—your dislike of those. Thanks.

[72] **Ann Jones:** Right, okay. I think we've covered literacy and numeracy, and I know Keith's got some other questions later on, if we ever get down to the lower end of this. So, we're going to go to tackling the link between deprivation and attainment. Simon.

[73] **Simon Thomas:** Diolch, Gadeirydd. Mae hwn, wrth gwrs, yn un o brif amcanion y Llywodraeth ar gyfer ein hysgolion a'n colegau ni, i gau y bwlch yma rhwng amddifadedd a chyrhaeddiad. Mae'r adroddiad, fel rwy'n ei ddarllen e, bach yn **Simon Thomas:** Thank you, Chair. This, of course, is one of the main aims of the Government for our schools and colleges, namely to close the gap between deprivation and attainment. The report, as I read it, is a bit mixed on this. There has been progress,

gymysg ar hynny. Mae yna gynnydd yn bendant, ond mae yna rai pethau sy'n bryderus, yn enwedig yn y cyfnod sylfaen, o bosib. Ond, yn gyntaf, i fynd yn ôl at y pwynt wnaethoch chi ychydig bach yn ôl ynglŷn â chefnogaeth gan y consortia rhanbarthol, a ydy e'n glir i chi fod y consortia erbyn hyn yn darparu'r gefnogaeth ar gyfer y sgiliau sydd eu hangen ar gyfer yr amcan arbennig yma?

[74] **Ms Keane:** Mae'r consortia mewn cyfnod o aeddfedu. Maen nhw wedi penodi, rwy'n credu, ymgynghorwyr ac arbenigwyr mewn llythrennedd a rhifedd. Maen nhw'n dod i adnabod eu hysgolion yn well.

certainly, but there are some things that cause concern, particularly in the foundation phase perhaps. First, going back to a point that you made a little earlier about the support from the regional consortia, is it clear to you that the consortia are now providing support for the skills that are needed to meet this particular aim?

Ms Keane: The consortia are in a period of maturing. They have appointed consultants and experts in literacy and numeracy, and they've come to get to know their schools better.

[75] I don't know whether you've got something to add, Simon, to the question on consortia?

[76] **Mr Brown:** The issue with consortia, as you're probably aware, is that we have done some field work for remit, which we're going to be publishing in mid May. We've got the evidence. We haven't actually seen the draft report yet ourselves, but we've picked up on some of the evidence that's coming through. I think there are a couple of things to say. First, the challenge advisers are very key now, in terms of the work of the regional consortia, because they'll be the individuals who follow through on work that the consultants in literacy and numeracy, who are working in the consortia, are doing, because they're the ones with direct interaction with schools. What we're seeing is that the challenge advisers seem to be more effective and more robust than the previous system leaders that existed in the previous set-up with the consortia.

[77] **Simon Thomas:** But they're not for every school, are they? Or are they?

[78] **Mr Brown:** They should be working with all schools—yes. The consortia are operating different models, as you are aware. The consortia ERW and GwE tend to be operating more on a hub model, whereas Central South Consortium and the EAS are operating on a regional model, but, regardless of that, the challenge advisers should be having contact with those individual school on a needs basis. Obviously, schools that are performing particularly well will have a much lighter touch from the challenge advisers. Schools that are performing less well should have much greater intervention from those advisers. I think that one of the things that we have picked up is—. Going back to your point about deprivation, one of the areas that we have picked up in the remit is, at the moment, because the system is maturing and the challenge advisers are getting to know their schools, they are not focusing deeply enough on the use of the pupil deprivation grant by schools at the moment. That is not to say that they won't as they roll forward and get more mature in their relationships, because this remit is a snapshot in time; we did the field work in December and January. We will be, of course, inspecting the consortia, and the plan is to inspect the consortia in 2016—in the spring and summer of 2016—based on the verified data that will come out in autumn this year.

[79] **Ms Keane:** A gaf i ddweud un peth am yr aseswyr cymheiriaid—y *peer inspectors*? Rydym wedi cytuno—mae Llywodraeth Cymru wedi cytuno gyda ni—ac mae hyn yn digwydd. Beth sy'n digwydd

Ms Keane: Could I say one thing about the peer inspectors? We have agreed—the Welsh Government has agreed with us—and this is happening. What happens is that we train challenge advisers to be peer inspectors with

yw ein bod ni'n hyfforddi'r ymgynghorwyr her i fod yn arolygwyr cymheiriaid—yn *peer inspectors*—gyda ni. Maen nhw'n dod allan gyda ni ar arolygiadau. Liciwn i ddweud gair byr am hynny. Wrth i fwy o bobl o'r sectorau ddod yn arolygwyr cymheiriaid a gweithio gyda ni ar y timau, rydym ni'n gobeithio symud ymlaen—bod Estyn yn symud ymlaen—i'r dyfodol, fel bod arolygu yn rhywbeth rydym yn ei wneud mewn partneriaeth gyda'r sector.

[80] Mae yna 80% o ysgolion uwchradd bellach sydd ag o leiaf un arolygydd cymheiriaid, felly mae gennym ni'r *motto*: o leiaf un arolygydd cymheiriaid ym mhob ysgol. Beth rydym eisiau gwneud yw tynnu pobl o'r sector i mewn er mwyn hybu'r gwaith hunan-arfarnu, er mwyn bod ysgolion yn gallu gwella eu hunain yn fwy yn y dyfodol, felly bod e ddim yn fater o 'Dyma'r arolygwyr—AEM—a dyma'r ysgolion', ond bod pobl o'r ysgolion—. Rydym wedi bod yn gwneud hyn ar raddfa fwyfwy ers 2004, wrth gwrs, ond, yn y cylch yma, mae pob tîm arolygu yn cynnwys arolygydd cymheiriaid—o leiaf un. Yn y dyfodol, y bwriad yw bod mwy a mwy o hyn yn digwydd, fel bod y sector ei hun, wedyn, yn dysgu setiau sgil yr arolygwyr—sut yr ydym yn dadansoddi data, beth yw arfer dda, sut yr ydym yn edrych ar y dysgu a'r addysgu, sut yr ydym yn deall ac yn dadansoddi arweinyddiaeth mewn ysgol. Mae'r rhai sydd wedi bod trwy'r hyfforddiant yma wedi gweithio gyda ni, ac wedi dweud mai dyma'r hyfforddiant gorau y maent erioed wedi'i gael, rhai ohonyn nhw.

[81] **Simon Thomas:** Diolch am hynny, ac mae'r datblygiad yna yn siŵr o gyfoethogi'r ffordd y mae'r ysgolion yn gallu gwneud y broses hunan-arfarnu yna. Rwy'n hoffi—os mai dyna'r gair—eich dewis o'r gair 'aeddffedu' ynglŷn â'r consortia; mae geiriau eraill yn cael eu defnyddio ar lawr gwlad, yn sicr. Un o'r pethau sydd yn edrych fel pe baen nhw'n gwrthdweud ei gilydd o safbwynt cyrhaeddiad plant sy'n derbyn prydau ysgol am ddim, er enghraifft, yw bod yna amcan yn y cyfnod sylfaen i gau'r bwlch rhwng y ddau grŵp, ond bod yr amcan, wedyn, erbyn cyfnod allweddol 4, yn un o godi pawb; hynny yw, nid oes amcan penodol o gau'r bwlch. A oes perygl, ar lefel consortia

us. They come out with us on inspections. I'd like to say a brief word about that. As more people from the sectors become peer inspectors and work with us on our teams, we hope, moving forward, that inspection is something that we do in partnership with the sector.

Now, 80% of secondary schools have at least one peer inspector, so we have a motto: at least one peer inspector in every school. So, what we want to do is pull the people from the sector in to boost the self-evaluation work, in order that schools can improve themselves better in future, so that it's not just an issue of 'Well, here are Her Majesty's inspectors and here are the schools', but that people from the schools—. We've been increasingly doing this since 2004, but, in this cycle, every inspection team includes a peer inspector—at least one. In the future, the intention is that more and more of this happens, so that the sector itself, then, learns the skillsets of the inspectors—how we analyse data, what is good practice, how we look at teaching at teachers and how we understand and analyse leadership in schools. Those who have been through this training, and have worked with us, have said that this the best training they've ever had, some of them.

Simon Thomas: Thank you for that, and I'm sure that that development will enrich the way that schools carry out that self-evaluation process. I like—if that's the word—your choice of the word 'maturing' for the consortia; other words are used on the ground, certainly. One of the things that seems to be contradictory in terms of the attainment of children eligible for free school meals, for example, is that there's an aim in the foundation phase to close the gap between the two groups, but the priority for key stage 4 is to raise everyone's attainment, and there's no particular priority for closing the gap. Is there a danger, in terms of the consortia and schools—and nationally,

a lefel yr ysgolion—ac yn genedlaethol, efallai—bod gwahanol dargedau fan hyn yn gweithio ar draws ei gilydd, a bod yna ddim digon o eglurder beth yw'r nod cenedlaethol: ai codi pawb—y cychod i gyd yn codi—neu gau'r bwlch yw hi? Neu a oes modd gwneud y ddau?

10:15

[82] **Ms Keane:** Rwy'n credu bod yn rhaid bod modd i wneud y ddau, onid oes e? Ni fyddwn i'n parchu unrhyw arweinydd ysgol a fyddai'n dweud, 'Rwyf jest eisiau sicrhau bod y plant mwy galluog yn cael y cymwysterau TGAU y maen nhw eu hangen, ac rwyf am anghofio—'. Rydym ni wedi dweud o'r blaen—

[83] **Simon Thomas:** A yw'r ffocws yn ddigon clir ar hynny yn y gyfundrefn o gonsortia ysgolion cenedlaethol, a ydych chi'n meddwl?

[84] **Ms Keane:** Mae'r dangosyddion perfformiad pan fo'r plant yn cyrraedd 16 yn tueddu i wthio ysgolion i edrych ar godi—yn enwedig i dargedu—y plant hynny sy'n debygol o gael gradd D, er mwyn eu codi nhw i C. Ond, wedi dweud hynny, rydym ni wedi dweud o'r blaen ac yn dal i ddweud bod y gefnogaeth a'r myrraeth y mae'r plant sy'n tangyflawni yn eu cael yn reit dda mewn ysgolion yng Nghymru. Os ydych chi'n edrych ar y cyflawniad yn PISA rydych chi'n gweld ein bod ni'n tangyflawni ar draws yr ystod gallu. Ni fyddwn i'n gallu dweud ein bod ni'n methu—. Efallai bod mwy o le i ddweud ein bod ni'n methu â chynnal y plant mwy abl a thalentog i gyrraedd yr uchelfannau o ran graddau TGAU a safon uwch.

[85] **Simon Thomas:** Dyna oedd fy nghwestiwn nesaf i, sef y ffocws yna ar A* i C. A yw hwnnw, mewn ffordd, yn rhy llac ar gyfer y plant mwyaf abl o bob cefndir? A ddylem ni fod, er enghraifft, yn trio codi rhai o'r plant mwyaf galluog—hyd yn oed o gefndir prydau ysgol am ddim ac ati—tuag at yr A* a'r A, a chael mwy o wybodaeth gan yr ysgolion ynglŷn â llwyddiant yn y maes neu gyflawniad yn y maes yna hefyd?

[86] **Ms Keane:** Nid yw gosod targedau

perhaps—that there are targets that work against each other here, and that there's a lack of clarity about what the national aim is: is it to raise everyone—raising all the boats— or to close the gap? Or is it possible to do both?

Ms Keane: I think it should be possible to do both, shouldn't it? I wouldn't respect any school leader who said, 'Well, I just want to ensure that the most able children have the GCSE qualifications that they need, and I'm going to forget—'. We've said before—

Simon Thomas: Is the focus clear enough on that in the system of national school consortia, do you think?

Ms Keane: The performance indicators when children reach the age of 16 tend to push schools to look at raising—particularly to target—those children who are likely to get a D grade, lifting them up to a C grade. But, having said that, we have said, and we still say, that the support and the interventions that underachieving children receive is quite good in schools in Wales. If you look at how we did in PISA, you'll see that we were underachieving across the ability range. So, I wouldn't say that we were failing—. It might be more accurate to say that we are failing to support the more able and talented children to reach the high points in terms of GCSE grades and A-level results.

Simon Thomas: That was my next question, namely the focus on A* to C. Is that, in a way, too loose for the most able children from every background? Should we be, for example, trying to raise the most able children—even from free school meals backgrounds, for example—towards A* and A grades, and getting more information from the schools about success or attainment in that area as well?

Ms Keane: Setting targets, in and of itself, in

yn ei hunan, fel arolygu mewn gwirionedd, yn fodd i godi safonau. Ble bynnag rŷch chi'n tynnu'r llinell yn y dangosyddion perfformiad, mae yna rywfaint wedyn o bethau yn mynd i ddigwydd sy'n mynd i helpu ysgolion wthio plant ar draws y llinell yna. Felly, rŷch chi wastad yn dod yn ôl at ansawdd y dysgu a'r addysgu, a sut ydym ni'n bwydo ansawdd ein hathrawon ni a'r bobl eraill, yr ymarferwyr eraill, sy'n gweithio. Beth bynnag rŷch chi'n edrych arno fe—gwella cyrhaeddiad y plant difreintiedig neu dynnu'r gorau allan o'r plant mwy abl a thalentog—yn y bôn, rŷch chi'n sôn am amrywiaeth pedagogaid, rŷch chi'n sôn am ddealltwriaeth athrawon, hyder athrawon. Mae angen wedyn—. Mae'r holl ddangosyddion perfformiad, y profion, y categoraiddio, arolygiadau Estyn—. Pwyso'r mochyn maen nhw'n ei wneud, nid bwydo'r mochyn. Y cwestiwn mawr yw: sut ydym ni'n dod yn well wrth fwydo'r mochyn?

[87] **Simon Thomas:** Wel, dyna'r cwestiwn. Nid wyf am i chi fwrw barn ynglŷn â'r nod ynglŷn â mynd i'r afael â'r cysylltiad rhwng amddifadedd a chyrhaeddiad plant, achos ar un lefel, mae hwnnw'n benderfyniad gwleidyddol. Ond, mae wedi bod yno am o leiaf bedair blynedd fel un o'r tair nod sydd gan y Gweinidog yma a'r Gweinidog blaenorol. Mae'n amlwg o'r adroddiadau rŷch chi wedi'u cynhyrchu dros y pum mlynedd diwethaf bod modd pwyso'r mochyn—i ddefnyddio'r gymhariaeth yna—ac mae'n amlwg ein bod ni'n gwybod beth sy'n mynd i mewn i'r mochyn, ond nid ydym ni'n gwybod, sbo, os ydy e o ansawdd digon da. Felly, a ydy'r targedau—rwy'n trio peidio â defnyddio'r gair 'targedau'—a ydy'r disgwyliadau, a ydy'r gofynion, a ydy'r cyswllt rhwng cyrhaeddiad a chefnidir a phrydau ysgol am ddim ac ati yn ddigon clir reit trwy'r system, fel bod arweinwyr addysgu yn gwybod beth maen nhw'n trio ei gyflawni, os ydyn nhw'n ei gyflawni neu beidio?

[88] **Ms Keane:** Rwy'n credu ei fod e'n fwy clir nawr nag y mae wedi bod erioed o'r blaen, ac mae'r grant amddifadedd wedi bod yn help. Wrth gwrs, ers dechrau'r flwyddyn yma, sef y flwyddyn ar ôl blwyddyn yr adroddiad blynyddol, rydym ni wedi bod yn arolygu'r defnydd y mae ysgolion wedi ei

the same way as inspection, to be honest, is not a way of raising standards. Wherever you draw the line in the performance indicators, certain things will happen that will help schools to push those children over that line. So, you always come back to the quality of the teaching and learning, and how we feed the quality of our teachers and the other people, the other practitioners, who work. Whatever you're looking at—improving the attainment of children from deprived backgrounds or drawing the best out of the more able and talented children—basically, you're talking about variations in pedagogy, the understanding of teachers and the confidence of teachers. There's then a need—. All the performance indicators, the tests, the categorisations, and Estyn inspections—. They're just weighing the pig, not feeding the pig. The important question is: how do we get better at feeding the pig?

Simon Thomas: Well, that's the question. I don't want you to give an opinion about the objective in terms of tackling the link between deprivation and attainment, because on one level, that's a political decision. But, it has been there for nearly four years as one of the three prime objectives for this Minister and the previous Minister. Evidently, from the reports that you've produced over the last five years, that it is possible to weigh the pig—to use that saying—and although we know what's going into the pig, we don't know if it's of sufficient quality. So, are the targets—I'm trying not to use the word 'targets'—the expectations, the requirements, the link between attainment and background and free school meals and so forth clear enough right the way through the system, so that school leaders know what they're trying to achieve, whether they are achieving it or not?

Ms Keane: I think it's clearer now than it's ever been before, and the deprivation grant has been of assistance. Of course, since the beginning of this year—the year following the year that was the subject of the annual report—we have been inspecting the use that schools make of that grant. So, there is more

wneud o'r grant yna. Felly, mae yna fwy o bwysau ar ysgolion i edrych i weld a ydyn nhw'n gwneud y defnydd gorau o'r grant yna, a thrwy hynny wrth gwrs, i dargedu'r plant yna sy'n derbyn prydau ysgol am ddim.

pressure on schools to look at whether they're making the best use of that grant, and through that, of course, to target those children who receive free school meals.

[89] **Ann Jones:** I've got Aled, Angela—and time is against us. Go on.

[90] **Aled Roberts:** O ran y wybodaeth ynghylch y grant amddifadedd, a ydy'r sefyllfa'n gyson ar draws Cymru? Roedd Simon yn dweud ei fod o'n fodlon ei fod yn gwybod beth sy'n cael ei fwydo, neu ansawdd y bwyd, ond nid wyf i'n siŵr iawn bod y sefyllfa yna'n gyson ar draws Cymru. Roedd yna ddisgwyl gan Lywodraeth Cymru yn y lle cyntaf bod pob ysgol yn cyhoeddi sut oedden nhw'n gwario'r grant ar eu gwefannau. Unwaith iddi ddod i'r amlwg bod yna ysgolion heb wefan, cawsom wybodaeth yn dweud, 'Wel, na, mae yna ddisgwyl i'r consortia gasglu'r wybodaeth', ac eto rwy'n ymwybodol bod yna un consortiwm sydd wedi ysgrifennu ataf i'n dweud nad ydy casglu'r wybodaeth yna yn rhan o'u pwrpas nhw. Felly, sut yn union ydym ni'n gwybod sut mae'r grant yna yn cael ei wario yn y lle cyntaf, er eich bod chi'n dweud rŵan bod eich arolygon chi yn dangos gwerth neu'r ffordd mae'r grant yna wedi cael ei ddefnyddio?

Aled Roberts: In terms of the information regarding the pupil deprivation grant, is the situation consistent across Wales? Simon said that he was satisfied that he knows what's being fed, or the quality of the food, but I'm not sure whether that situation is consistent across Wales. There was an expectation from the Welsh Government in the first place that every school would publish how they spent the grant on their websites. Once it was highlighted that there were schools that didn't have websites, we had information saying, 'Well, no, the consortia are expected to collate this information', yet I'm aware that one consortium has written to me saying that that is not part of its remit. So, how exactly do we know how that grant is spent in the first place, although you have just said that your inspections show the value of that grant or how it's been used?

[91] **Ms Keane:** Rydym ni'n adrodd yn ein hadroddiadau, bellach, y flwyddyn yma, ers mis Medi diwethaf, ar y defnydd mae ysgolion yn ei wneud o'r grant. Byddwn ni'n adrodd yn yr adroddiad blynyddol nesaf ar y trosolwg o sut mae'r ysgolion, yn y flwyddyn 2014-15, wedi gwneud defnydd ar y grant at ei gilydd. Nid wy'n gwybod os wyt ti eisiau dweud rhywbeth fan hyn, Meilyr, achos rydym ni'n tynnu rhywfaint o'r wybodaeth yma at ei gilydd yn barod.

Ms Keane: We currently report, this year, since last September, on the use that schools make of that grant. We will be reporting in the next annual report on the overview of how schools, in the year 2014-15, have made use of the grant in general. I do not know whether you want to say something here, Meilyr, because we already draw some of this information together.

[92] **Mr Rowlands:** Ydym. Rwy'n credu, yn y gorffennol, roedd rhywfaint o ddiffyg eglurder; rwy'n credu ein bod ni wedi trafod hyn fan hyn o'r blaen. Roedd ysgolion yn cymysgu amddifadedd a thangyflawni. Mae hynny'n dod at y pwynt roeddech chi'n ei wneud: nid oedd digon o sylw felly'n cael ei roi i wneud yn siŵr bod y plant mwy galluog a oedd dan anfantais yn cael y gefnogaeth. Mae hyn yn mynd yn ôl cyn y grant penodol yma. Rydych chi'n cofio, mae'n siŵr,

Mr Rowlands: Yes. In the past, there was, I think, a lack of clarity; I think that we have discussed this here before. Schools were confusing deprivation and underachievement. That comes back to the point that you were making: not enough attention was, therefore, given to ensuring that the more able children who were disadvantaged were getting support. This pre-dates this specific grant. I am sure that you remember RAISE, namely raising attainment and individual standards in

RAISE, sef codi cyrhaeddiad a safonau addysgol unigolion yng Nghymru; edrychwn ni ar y grant hwnnw tua saith neu wyth mlynedd yn ôl a dyma'n union beth oeddem ni'n ei ddweud. Mae'r broblem yna wedi parhau tan nawr. Mae'r dystiolaeth rydym ni'n ei chael nawr yn awgrymu bod ysgolion wedi deall bod yn rhaid i'r grant presennol gael ei wario ar blant sy'n gymwys i gael prydau ysgol am ddim, beth bynnag fo'u gallu nhw. Felly, mae yna arwyddion bod y cynllunio mae ysgolion yn ei wneud yn mynd i'r afael â'r ystod lawn o allu.

[93] Mae hi dipyn bach yn rhy gynnar i ddweud a ydy hynny'n cael effaith ar safonau. Mae yna rywffaint o dystiolaeth ei fod yn cael effaith ar bresenoldeb, ymddygiad, agwedd plant tuag at addysg ac yn y blaen, ond cymharol ychydig yw'r dystiolaeth ei fod yn cael effaith mawr ar safonau, yn rhannol oherwydd ei fod yn un gwendid gydag ysgolion eu bod nhw ddim yn arfarnu yn union pa mor effeithiol yw'r grant o ran gwella safonau. Ond, mae yna enghreifftiau o ysgolion penodol, ac rydym ni'n sôn am Bishop Gore yn yr adroddiad, ond mae yna ysgolion eraill—Aberteifi, er enghraifft—lle mae yna enghreifftiau o blant yn cael A neu A* o gefndir o amddifadedd.

[94] **Ms Keane:** Mae'r heriau yn sylweddol, wrth gwrs. Mae'n rhaid inni beidio ag anghofio hynny. Rydym ni'n gofyn lot gan ysgolion i fedru goresgyn heriau cymdeithasol yng nghefndir rhai o'r plant yma yn enwedig. Ond mae rhai ysgolion yn gwneud gwaith bendigedig, yn tynnu'r rhieni yma i mewn i'w hysgolion mewn ardaloedd difreintiedig iawn. Roeddwn i'n siarad gydag un pennaeth mewn ardal ddifreintiedig y diwrnod o'r blaen, ac roedd hi'n dweud ei bod hi wedi cael 100% o rieni'n dod i'w nosweithiau rhieni. Beth oedd hi'n ei wneud ar gychwyn y broses oedd defnyddio'r rhieni oedd yn dod i genhadu ymhlith y rhieni hynny oedd ddim yn dod. Mae hynny'n dangos, os ydy un ysgol yn gallu gwneud hynny, gall pob ysgol wneud hynny. Yr ateb yw dwyn perswâd ar rieni bod budd mewn addysg, eu helpu nhw i oresgyn rhai o'r teimladau negyddol, efallai, sydd ganddyn nhw oherwydd eu profiad nhw o addysg, ac wedyn eu tynnu nhw i mewn i fyd a bywyd yr ysgol trwy raglenni dysgu teuluol, a hefyd

education in Wales; we looked at that grant about seven or eight years ago, and this is exactly what we were saying. That problem has persisted until now. The evidence that we are getting now suggests that schools have understood that the current grant has to be spent on children who are eligible for free school meals, regardless of their ability. So, there are indications that the planning that schools are doing is tackling the full range of abilities.

It's a little too early to say whether that's having an impact on standards. There is some evidence that it is having an impact on attendance, behaviour, children's attitudes towards education and so forth, but there is relatively little evidence on whether it is having a big impact on standards, partly because one weakness in schools is that they don't evaluate exactly how effective the grant is in terms of improving standards. But, there are examples from specific schools, and we talk about Bishop Gore in the report, but there are other schools—Cardigan, for example—where there are examples of pupils from deprived backgrounds getting A or A*.

Ms Keane: The challenges are substantial, of course. We must not forget that. We are asking a lot of schools to be able to overcome social challenges in the background of some of these children in particular. But some schools are doing wonderful work, drawing these parents into their schools in very deprived areas. I was talking to one headteacher in a deprived area the other day, and she was saying that she had had 100% of parents coming to her parents' evenings. What she was doing, at the start of the process, was using the parents who had come to preach the message to those who had not come. That shows that, if one school can do that, every school can do it. The solution is to persuade parents that there is value to education, to help them to overcome some of the negative feelings that they may have because of their experience of education, and then to draw them into the life and the world of the school through family learning programmes, and also to draw them in to understand the work of the classroom and to

eu tynnu nhw i mewn i ddeall gwaith y understand how to promote reading and the
dosbarth a deall sut i hybu darllen a development of language among children.
datblygiad iaith ymhlith plant. Gorau i gyd pa The younger they are, the better.
mor ifanc ydyn nhw.

[95] **Ann Jones:** Okay. Angela's got another one and then I know Aled has as well, but can I just—

[96] **Angela Burns:** Yes. I'm just so relieved, actually, to have heard you make that comment about what we're asking education to do, because there's such a large body of evidence out there that says that to break the link between deprivation and attainment—which is something every educator and every politician is chasing after—that elusive goal, it isn't always within the purview of a school to give that. We have examples of many schools with good programmes that raise all boats, but that gap still remains. I just wondered what evidence Estyn might be able to add to the story about what we need to do outside of the school setting, because the concern I have is that we put so much pressure on schools to close that gap, and we put so much money into schools to close that gap, and I just want to know that people are asking the question, actually, 'Is that where the effort should be, or will schools be able to close that gap if we can get the stuff around it?' I wondered if you have much evidence on the good schools, what else they do around it. I fear it's outside your remit, but what I'd really like to know is, with the good schools, that are able to close that gap, is it because, at the same time, there are some massive social programmes around those children going on, and the schools that can't close the gap, it's because they're in an area where those social programmes are not happening, and therefore the solution would be, or a solution could be, to put more money into the social programmes, because that then helps those children to achieve? Throwing money at the same problem and not being able to solve that problem means you have to think out of the box.

[97] **Ms Keane:** The schools that succeed, of course, like Ysgol Gymunedol Cefn Hengoed in Swansea, are the schools that accept that their mission is a social and community mission, and they are not the people—. Some schools will say, 'Ah well, poor attendance is the family's trouble; they're not getting them up early in the morning', and they blame the family. The schools that succeed are the ones who actually create an environment in school where multi-agencies can operate to set in place a team around the child that links into the work that's being done with families to support them. That's at the end of the continuum where a lot of support is needed, where children's services, social workers and health workers have a base in the school, where the education, social and health provision has become seamless, because children can experience it through the school. So, it is multi-agency working.

[98] What they can do in the curriculum—and Rhyl High School has been very good at doing this—a school that was in special measures; it's a case study in the annual report—

[99] **Angela Burns:** You know how to make our Chair happy. [*Laughter.*]

[100] **Ms Keane:** They have done it through partnerships with external agencies to provide experiences that draw these disengaged pupils back into the curriculum. That is the key. It is all there in the annual report, in the case studies. The other aspect of that is the willingness of the school to step outside the boundaries of the school. This is where I say—somewhere in the foreword I say—that the absolutely essential thing for the leaders now is to be able to think beyond their school: it's absolutely essential for leadership. No leader is a good leader unless they can think beyond—think in terms of transitions into the school, out of the school, but, beyond that, think about the other agencies and partnerships they can work with. Rhyl High School, they're working with local sports people, they're working with the army, they're working with local business people, to offer these youngsters—. And it's been marvellous,

the way they've built up the self-esteem of those young people, who have now got qualifications simply because that school was turned around. It's marvellous.

[101] So, it's the willingness of the school to work with the community to see their mission as not just being an academic one, but to serve the whole community. I would say one other thing—out-of-school-hours learning. Out-of-school-hours learning is key to keeping children in the ambience of the school.

[102] **Angela Burns:** I totally buy into all of that, and I think it's a real success going forward, those kinds of schools, but my 'but' is the areas where the schools are not supported by their local authority, not supported by their regional consortia, and have no peer support from other schools around them. You know, they've got those massive targets—they're saddled with them—but they're not getting that support and that opportunity to lead outside of their schools. Those are the schools that I think must actually just find it all incredibly hard, because we need somebody to come and get those external partners to play their part too, and, in a lot of areas, they don't.

10:30

[103] **Ms Keane:** I think we said a lot in the annual report about the benefits of school-to-school improvement, and, of course, the big obstacle there is the denial among some senior managers that actually it's as bad as we say it is.

[104] **Angela Burns:** Yes. Thank you.

[105] **Ann Jones:** Right, we've got half an hour to do four sections. So, I'll leave you to do the maths on that one. Early years provision and the foundation phase. Paul.

[106] **Paul Davies:** Yes. Thanks, Chair. I just want to ask you some questions with regard to the performance of settings for children aged under five and some questions around the foundation phase. I notice that 95% of settings for children under five were judged to have excellent or good performance. However, a quarter of settings actually required follow-up. Could you just tell us what the main reasons were for that, because I'm just not clear, if 95% of settings were good or excellent, why there was a requirement to go back to 25% of them?

[107] **Ms Keane:** Yes. We look at a lot of different aspects of schools and settings, and, at the more extreme end of follow-up, of course, we've got special measures or those needing improvement, and we monitor those more closely because, pretty much, there's a lot to check on in those schools. There's a lot of support needed. But there are schools and settings that have maybe some aspects—it could be to do with health and safety issues, it could be to do with—. The weakest aspect of settings is the provision of ICT, because they obviously don't have the resources. Often, pre-reading skills and pre-numeracy skills and experiences are well delivered in settings—this is for three-year-olds to four-year-olds in the main—and that's why you've got quite a high number of them—not many of them are getting 'excellent'; it's still a relatively small number getting 'excellent'. Most of them fall into the category of 'good'. But the reason that the follow-up exceeds the numbers that are below the quality threshold is simply because the provision can be good overall—in other words it's got more good features than shortcomings—but there are still a few shortcomings in there that we need to go back and check on, to check that they have met the recommendations that we made.

[108] **Paul Davies:** And, as far as the shortcomings go, is there a theme there, would you say?

[109] **Ms Keane:** I think the ICT one is a pretty common one. There's often a recommendation about ICT on settings. Otherwise, their resources are not bad and the level of

care is good. We may be a little disappointed that not more of them get into the ‘excellent’ category.

[110] **Paul Davies:** Okay. I think your report makes it absolutely clear that you believe that the foundation phase is very successful. However, I was speaking to a headteacher of a secondary school recently, and he was telling me that he was obviously now receiving pupils who had benefited from the foundation phase, but one thing that he had noticed perhaps more now than he did a few years ago was that there were more behavioural problems with children coming through the system and he perhaps thought that was because of the lack of structure within the foundation phase. Do you recognise that?

[111] **Ms Keane:** I can’t say we’ve got any evidence to support that view. It’s true that children are encouraged to be more independent, but it’s in a very structured environment. I mean, one of the advantages of settings and schools for very young children is that they actually give them boundaries for play and social interaction. So, if it works properly, then it should be helping children to be independent but to understand that they’ve got to co-operate and work with others and that others have rights too. We have no evidence to support that view, that any reason for poor behaviour can be traced back to the foundation phase. I would say on the whole about the foundation phase that I would be optimistic. Certainly, we’ve seen improvements in literacy—in reading and in writing. The issue of the tests and the LNF maybe drive a perception that it’s age not stage, you know, because the whole thing was about child development and the stages of child development. But, a confident foundation phase setting or school will always have an eye primarily on child development and the developmental needs of individual children and obviously will aim to reach a certain level by a certain stage, but not lack the confidence so that they revert to inappropriate schemes of work to try and get children up to standard. They need to understand how children develop and how the children in their care are developing, so it requires a wider set of skills than the skills required just to set children down in front of a phonics scheme and get them to drill.

[112] **Ann Jones:** I’ve got Aled, who’s got a small point, and Simon, and then I’ll come back to you, Paul.

[113] **Aled Roberts:** Pan aethom ni i’r OECD ym Mharis, nid oedden nhw’n feirniadol o’r cyfnod sylfaen, ond roedden nhw’n awgrymu bod yna orddweud o ran lefelau staffio a’n bod ni, hwyrach, wedi canolbwyntio’n fwy ar faint o oedolion a ddylai fod o fewn y cyfnod sylfaen yn hytrach nag ar ansawdd y ddarpariaeth. A oes gennych chi unrhyw sylw ar hynny?

Aled Roberts: When we went to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in Paris, they weren’t critical of the foundation phase, but they suggested that there was overstating in terms of staffing levels and that we had focused more on how many adults should be within the foundation phase rather than on the quality of the provision. Do you have any comment on that?

[114] **Ms Keane:** Mae’n wir bod ansawdd y profiad y mae’r plant yn ei gael yn—bod yna berthynas rhwng hynny ac ansawdd yr hyfforddiant y mae’r oedolyn wedi ei gael, ond buaswn i’n dweud bod cael hyfforddiant o ansawdd da ar gyfer gweithwyr yn y cyfnod sylfaen yn fwy pwysig na faint ohonyn nhw sydd yno: mae’n well cael llai o bobl o ansawdd uwch na mwy o bobl o ansawdd is.

Ms Keane: It’s true to say that the quality of the experience that the children have—that there’s a relationship between that and the quality of the training that the adult has had, but I would say that having good quality training for workers in the foundation phase is more important than the number of people who are there: it’s more important to have fewer people of higher quality than more people of lower quality.

[115] **Aled Roberts:** Ond mae yna wendid

Aled Roberts: But there is a weakness to

i ryw raddau, achos nid oes cymaint o strwythur ynglŷn â datblygiad proffesiynol ymysg y cynorthwywyr dosbarth.

some extent, because there's not so much of a structure for professional development among classroom assistants.

[116] **Ms Keane:** Wel, mae yna gynlluniau ar waith, wrth gwrs.

Ms Keane: Well, there are plans in place, of course.

[117] **Aled Roberts:** Oes, mae yna. Oes. Ond a fydddech chi'n cefnogi'r syniad o ehangu ar hynny?

Aled Roberts: Yes, there are. Yes. But wouldn't you support the idea of expanding on that?

[118] **Ms Keane:** Byddwn. Rwy'n cefnogi'r cynllun yna, yn bendant.

Ms Keane: Yes, I would. I would support that scheme, certainly.

[119] **Ann Jones:** Okay. Simon.

[120] **Simon Thomas:** Jest un pwynt bach, achos roeddech chi'n sôn y byddai unrhyw leoliad cyfnod sylfaen hyderus yn gwybod yn iawn i ymdrin â plentyn yn unigol, i bob pwrpas, yn enwedig o gofio bod 11 mis yn gallu bod rhwng y plant yma, ac mae hynny'n fwch mawr yr oedran yna, onid yw?

Simon Thomas: Just one brief point, because you mentioned that any foundation phase setting that was confident would know full well to treat the child individually, to all intents and purposes, given that there can be 11 months between these children, and that that's a very big gap at that age, is it not?

[121] **Ms Keane:** Yr oedran yna, ydy.

Ms Keane: At that age, yes.

[122] **Simon Thomas:** Ond a ydy'r profion cenedlaethol a'r agwedd genedlaethol yn adlewyrchu hynny? Ac a ydy'r cyfnod sylfaen ar ei hyd yn ddigon hyderus i ymwneud â hynny, neu a ydy'r pryderon fod yna gyriant ychwanegol yn gwyro mewn rhyw ffordd neu'n gwyrddroi'r cyfnod sylfaen yn rhywbeth sydd a sail iddo?

Simon Thomas: But do the national tests and the national aspect reflect that? And is the foundation phase as whole confident enough to deal with that, or are the concerns that there is an additional driver that's steering or overturning the foundation phase something that have a basis to them?

[123] **Ms Keane:** Wel, rydym ni'n dweud yn yr adroddiad fod yna leiafrif o ysgolion a lleoliadau lle maen nhw'n gweithio yn fwy ffurfiol oherwydd yr hyn y maen nhw'n credu mae'r fframwaith yn ei ddisgwyl a'r profion yn ei ddisgwyl. Mae'r profion yn dod, wrth gwrs, ar ddiwedd y cyfnod sylfaen, nid yn ystod y cyfnod sylfaen, ac felly mae yna gyfnod go hir yn fanna, o dair i saith oed pryd mae'r plant yn gallu datblygu, ac rwy'n credu, os nad yw ysgolion yn disgwyl bod y plant i gyd yn datblygu yn yr un ffordd ar yr un cyflymdra—ac nid wyf yn credu bod llawer ohonyn nhw'n gwneud hynny; dim ond y rhai di-hyder a fyddai'n gwneud hynny—yna nid wyf yn gweld bod problem fawr yno.

Ms Keane: Well, we say in the report that there is a minority of schools and settings where they work in a more formal manner because of what they believe the framework expects and the tests expect. The tests come, of course, at the end of the foundation phase, not during it, and so there's quite a long period of three to seven years of age when the children can develop, and I think that, if schools don't expect all the children to develop in the same way at the same pace—and I don't think that many of them do that; only the ones lacking in confidence would do that—then I don't see that there is a big problem there.

[124] **Ann Jones:** Okay. Paul.

[125] **Paul Davies:** That's it.

[126] **Ann Jones:** Oh, thank you very much. Yes, you can come back to this committee again. That's good, thank you. I want to move to the section that Lynne Neagle wanted to talk about on local authorities and stuff like that. All our questioning is important, but I think I wanted to get some feedback on that, so, Lynne, did you want to take your questions?

[127] **Lynne Neagle:** Thanks, Ann, and can I add my thanks to Ann for her work in last five years, and my personal thanks for your engagement with me around some of the particular challenges we face in Torfaen. We've still got eight local authorities that are in follow-up, including four in special measures.

[128] **Ms Keane:** Two have come out now.

[129] **Lynne Neagle:** Oh, right. Okay.

[130] **Ms Keane:** So it's six now.

[131] **Lynne Neagle:** Oh, that's better. Marvellous. [*Laughter.*]

[132] **Ann Jones:** Would you like to stay on? [*Laughter.*]

[133] **Ms Keane:** Bridgend and Gwynedd have come out.

[134] **Lynne Neagle:** Right. Can I just ask generally how you think things are going in terms of the drive to make sure that, you know, we've got all our LEAs performing well, with particular reference to those that are at the bottom of the heap, as it were? I have seen some very encouraging changes in Torfaen specifically, in terms of attitude and leadership, but just your comments on the general situation, really.

[135] **Ms Keane:** The fact that I said in the annual report that there were still eight in follow-up, with four, of course, being in special measures, was disappointing. Since then, two have come out, as I've just said, but also we are expecting to be able to reflect the progress that's been made in some others as well on our visits during the rest of this year. So, we are seeing improvement, albeit perhaps slow in some instances. I don't know if you want to add something to that, Simon.

[136] **Mr Brown:** Yes. In the reporting year, we inspected only one authority, which was Ceredigion, which, as you are aware was quite excellent and excellent. During 2013-14, Caerphilly came out of special measures; Pembrokeshire, Anglesey, Powys and Rhondda Cynon Taf came out. As Ann said, Bridgend came out in December, and Gwynedd, in fact, came out today. It'll be on our website today and the authority had the letter last week. What we're seeing in terms of our monitoring of those authorities remaining in special measures—and, as you're aware, we've got four in special measures, we've got one in significant improvement and the Vale of Glamorgan is in Estyn monitoring—that those that are coming out are doing so because they are improving school attendance. That is one of the features. The second one is that they're getting much sharper at analysing school performance data. I think, going back to some of the comments that were made here about individual pupils and the support that's for them, I think one of the key features of the Ceredigion inspection was that they've got very effective data systems to look at individual children, and that includes children with additional learning needs and features deprivation data and everything. So, they can put in appropriate targets to support those children. As Ann said, the targets they put in are multi-agency, so you've got all sectors of the council working together and with other bodies to support those young people—not just at a young age, but right the way through to teenagers, where the youth support services kick in and support them.

[137] The other thing we're finding is that partnership working is tending to get better in a number of authorities. I think one of the key features of Anglesey and one of the reasons why Anglesey came out was that, not only have they got an alignment in terms of the direction of travel between the elected officers, senior officers and headteachers, so everybody was on board, but also they've done a lot of work developing school-to-school support and matching up appropriate schools to other schools to support each other, which goes back to this idea of the way in which you could build capacity in the system. The other feature of this support, if you like—peer-to-peer support—is where authorities are getting better at offering leadership, or sharing their leadership skills with other authorities. An example of this is the work that Ceredigion did with Powys. One of the reasons why Powys came out of Estyn monitoring was because they adopted some of the sort of cultural systems that were operating in Ceredigion. They adapted it to their own authority and have taken those on board. As a result, they've started on that improvement journey. They were kick-started on that path.

[138] The ones that are still in follow-up, I think, are characterised by the fact that the pupils there are not making sufficient progress in terms of standards. As Ann said, they're still quite slow. Their quality of self-evaluation is quite mixed. Some of the dialogue that we're having with those authorities, that our link inspectors are having with the leadership of those authorities, is actually getting a degree of honesty in recognising where the shortcomings are: be upfront about it, share it with your elected members in terms of scrutiny in cabinet, share it with your senior officers and, more importantly, share it with the headteachers, so that you've got a culture of openness and transparency across that authority. Going back to what you said about Torfaen, that's one of the features we've noticed over the past year to 18 months with Torfaen: that openness is beginning to spread across the authority. Once people begin to recognise what the issues are, then you can have a concerted effort to start to tackle them.

[139] The other area that is improving is the willingness of authorities to use their statutory powers to intervene in some way. You will remember at previous committees that one of the things we criticised local authorities for was that they were very reluctant to intervene. We've noticed now that there's a much greater use of warning letters being sent out, and so forth, and in some schools, where they are having difficulties in terms of the governance of the school, authorities now are much more willing to put in an interim executive board and do something with the governing body in that school. So, I think that is the landscape we're seeing, that we have got one or two authorities that are slow to catch up, but a number of the authorities now are beginning on that improvement curve.

[140] **Ms Keane:** We are seeing more honesty and an openness and willingness to accept criticism.

[141] **Lynne Neagle:** Yes, okay, thank you. In terms of the good practice that you referred to, I mean there is clearly some sharing of good practice, because you gave an example, but how is that being rolled out across Wales? Because we know what works, don't we?

10:45

[142] **Ms Keane:** We do. The collaboration is notable. It's notable that Anglesey, Powys and Pembrokeshire came out of category or follow-up because they collaborated with another authority or internally within their authority. I think that collaboration—learning from other people—is the key. That has happened and I'm hoping the same thing will be true in the remaining authorities.

[143] **Lynne Neagle:** Can I just ask, because obviously we've got a concentration of problems in a particular part of Wales, how that is going to specifically work there? Because you haven't got maybe the neighbouring authorities where there is the good practice.

[144] **Ms Keane:** It doesn't have to be the neighbouring authority, of course, and, sometimes, it's the intervention board itself that has people on it—I mean, in Torfaen there's representatives of the authorities, so they can bring up good practice through the intervention boards themselves. I mean, I think there are issues: the authorities are small. These authorities are small and they do have issues or challenges to do with capacity and obviously we are facing a situation of a possible redrawing of boundaries, which, in itself, creates another set of challenges.

[145] **Mr Brown:** In terms of the remit I mentioned about the regional consortia, picking up on Aled's point, one of the things that we asked the team to look at when they went on site was to look at how the regional consortia are monitoring the schools' plans—the pupil deprivation grant plans—and any potential impact, and, as Meilyr said, it's early days for that impact to be evaluated, so we will be reporting on that in May.

[146] The other aspect that we've asked the team to look at, when they go to a consortium that has got a significant group of authorities that are in follow-up, was how will that regional consortium be able to target its resources to support those authorities, because some consortia have got a greater challenge than others.

[147] **Lynne Neagle:** And are there any sort of initial findings emerging yet?

[148] **Mr Brown:** Not at the moment, no. I think, unfortunately, we'll have to wait until May.

[149] **Lynne Neagle:** Okay, thank you.

[150] **Ann Jones:** Keith, and then Aled.

[151] **Keith Davies:** Jest i ddilyn lan achos clymu'r awdurdodau a'r consortia gyda'i gilydd, achos fel y dywedoch chi, Ann, maen nhw'n llawer rhy fach. Nid yw'r arbenigedd yn yr awdurdodau nawr a oedd yno o'r blaen, ond mae'r arbenigedd yn y consortia, i fod. O'r blaen, os oedd cwynion, roeddem yn dod â llywodraethwyr yr ysgol i mewn, a pha un ai oedd yn ysgol uwchradd neu'n arweinyddiaeth gan y pennaeth, byddai'r awdurdod yn trefnu arolwg yn yr ysgol. Nid yw hynny'n digwydd nawr cyn belled ag yr wyf i'n gwybod. Oni ddylai'r consortia wneud hynny, felly? Os yw'r awdurdod yn ffael ymateb, achos ei fod yn llawer rhy fach, oni ddylent fod yn gofyn i'r consortia, 'I mewn â chi: edrychwch ar yr adran Ffrangeg yna; edrychwch yn yr ysgol gynradd yna a rhowch adroddiad i'r llywodraethwyr'? Achos, yn y pen draw, y llywodraethwyr sy'n penodi penaethiaid a phob athro neu athrawes mewn ysgol.

Keith Davies: I just want to follow up on tying the authorities and consortia together, because as you said, Ann, they are too small. The authorities don't have the expertise that they used to have, but the expertise is in the consortia, or it's supposed to be. Previously, if there were complaints, we brought the school governors in, and whether it was a secondary school or whether it was the leadership of the head, the authorities would organise an inspection in the school. That doesn't happen now, as far as I know. Should the consortia be doing that? If the authority can't respond because it's too small, shouldn't it be asking the consortia, saying, 'Look, you go in there: look at the French department; please look at that primary school and present the report to the governors'? Because, ultimately, it's the governors who appoint heads and every teacher in a school.

[152] **Ms Keane:** Mae'r broses o gategoreiddio yn gwneud hynny i raddau, onid yw hi? Sef, mae'r categoreiddio yn

Ms Keane: The categorisation process does that to some extent, doesn't it? Namely, the categorisation asks the challenge advisers to

gofyn i'r ymgynghorwyr her i fynd i mewn i'r ysgol ac i roi her i'r ysgol ac wedyn rhoi adroddiad ar yr ysgol, nid yn unig ar y data, sydd efallai ddim mor ddibynadwy â beth y maen nhw'n ei weld yn yr ysgol.

go into the school and to give a challenge to the school and then to report on the school, not only on the data, which may not be as reliable as what they've seen going on in the schools.

[153] Mae'r dyletswyddau statudol dros wella ysgolion a gwasanaethau addysg yn dal i fod gyda'r awdurdodau a mater i'r awdurdodau yw comisiynu'r gwasanaethau y maen nhw eisiau eu gweld felly.

The statutory responsibilities for school improvement and improving education services still remain with the authorities and it is a matter for the authorities to commission the services that they want to see therefore.

[154] **Keith Davies:** Llai ohonyn nhw sydd ei eisiau.

Keith Davies: They need fewer of them.

[155] **Ann Jones:** Okay. Aled.

[156] **Aled Roberts:** Rwyf eisiau troi yn ôl at y cyfnod pan oeddwn i'n gynghorydd ac yr oeddem yn sôn am sefydlu'r consortia yma. Roeddwn wedi synnu a dweud y gwir achos rydych chi wedi bod yn sôn bod cryfder data'n bwysig a'n bod yn mynd i lawr i lefel y plentyn unigol er mwyn gwella. Ond, roedd sefyllfa yn y gogledd lle'r oedd cynhorau unigol yn casglu data hollol wahanol i'w gilydd a ddaru ni wario misoedd yn sôn am ba grwpiau o ddata a oedd yn mynd i gael eu sefydlu gan y consortia. A gaf ofyn i chi, felly, a oes problem o ran anghysondeb ymysg y consortia ynglŷn â'r data sy'n cael eu casglu a'r ffaith ein bod ond yn wlad o ryw 3 miliwn, ac eto rydym yn creu sefyllfa lle mae yna bedwar gwahanol fath o gasglu data er mwyn gwella? A hefyd, y mae arfer yn hollol wahanol o fewn y consortia. Roeddwn yn methu â chredu bod yna un consortiwm i lawr yma lle'r oedd yr arweinydd her yn mynd i mewn i'r ysgol ac yn adrodd yn ôl i'r corff llywodraethol. Wel, yn bendant, hwyrach bod hynny'n digwydd yn yr ysgolion sy'n methu yn y gogledd, ond nid yw hynny'n arfer rheolaidd yn y consortia yna. Felly, a oes yna berygl, wrth inni ddweud mai cyfrifoldeb grwpiau o awdurdodau yw penderfynu sut maen nhw'n ymwneud, ein bod yn gweld, tair neu bedair blynedd i lawr y llwybr, bod yna wahaniaethau o ran y consortia, yn yr un modd ag yr ydym wedi gweld gwahaniaethau ymysg awdurdodau unigol?

Aled Roberts: I just want to turn back to the period when I was a councillor and we were talking about setting up the consortia. I was surprised, to tell you the truth, because you've been talking about the strength of data being important and that we are going down to the level of the individual child in order to have improvement. But, there was a situation in north Wales where the individual councils were collating entirely different data to each other and we spent months talking about which groups of data would be established by the consortia. Can I ask you, therefore, is there a problem in terms of inconsistency, in terms of the consortia, on the data that are collated? We're only a country of 3 million people and, yet, we are creating a situation where there are four different kinds of data collection methods being used and also different practices within the consortia. I couldn't believe that there was one consortium where the challenge leader was going into the school and reporting back to the governing body. Well, certainly, maybe that happens in the schools that are failing in north Wales, but it's not regular practice in the consortia. So, is there a risk, in saying that it's the responsibility of groups of authorities to decide how they're involved, that we will see, three or four years down the line, that there are variations in terms of the consortia, in the same way as we've seen variation among individual authorities?

[157] **Ms Keane:** Erbyn dechrau mis Mai, mi fyddwch chi'n gallu darllen ein

Ms Keane: By the start of May, you will be able to read our report and that report will

hadroddiad ni ac fe fydd yr adroddiad yna yn adnabod y gwahaniaeth rhwng consortiwm a chonsortiwm, yn enwedig sut maen nhw'n gweithredu. Mae yna strwythur wedi cael ei osod rhwng y consortia iddyn nhw ddod at ei gilydd er mwyn safoni'r ffordd maen nhw'n categoreiddio. Felly, maen nhw eu hunain yn adnabod bod yna berygl eu bod yn gweithredu mewn ffyrdd gwahanol ac yn gosod disgwyliadau gwahanol. Felly, maen nhw wedi dod at ei gilydd i osod y strwythur.

identify the variances between consortium and consortium, particularly in how they operate. There is a structure that has been set between the consortia for them to come together in order to standardise the way that they categorise. So, they themselves recognise that there is a risk that they act in different ways and set different expectations. So, they've come together to set that structure.

[158] Ni allaf ddweud wrthyhych beth yw'n harfarniadau terfynol ni ar hyn o bryd, ond fe allaf ddweud y byddwn yn dweud mwy ym mis Mai, ac fe fyddwn wedyn yn mynd rhagddi i adrodd ar arolygiadau o bob consortiwm unigol, o flwyddyn nesaf ymlaen. Bydd y manylion, felly, ynglŷn ag effeithiolrwydd y ffordd y maen nhw'n gweithredu yn yr adroddiadau hynny.

Now, I can't tell you what our final evaluations will be at the moment, but I will be able to say more in May, and then we will be able to go ahead and report on the inspections of each individual consortium, from next year onwards. The details will be there in terms of the effectiveness of the way that they operate in those reports.

[159] **Ann Jones:** I want to move, if I can, to provision for vulnerable learners and I think that may very well be the last section, unless there's any—. I will be lenient, but we'll see how we go. I've got Angela and Keith down for that to start with and then we'll see. I'm sure there'll be other questions.

[160] **Angela Burns:** I think my first question to you is to ask if you've had any input into the proposed ALN Bill from an Estyn point of view and from what you have found in schools—any formal input.

[161] **Ms Keane:** I'm very pleased to say that we have been consulted in detail during the development of this Bill. Yes, we have. We've had several meetings with the policy leads who've come over and briefed us and had a full discussion with us. I'm very pleased about that.

[162] **Angela Burns:** Well, I'm pleased too, because I know that that is a Bill that is very dear to the heart of every member of this committee. So, we'd like to see it develop in a very robust way, because, in fact, it leads quite neatly into pupil referral units, because, you know, we've had reports from—forgive me; my brain's a bit scrambled today. I think it was the Edinburgh report that actually said that a lot of children in pupil referral units actually have special educational needs, which can't be an appropriate setting for a child with that. And, there's also this issue about when is a special educational need—. Does it stop at behavioural issues? And, there's all this, sort of, grey area in between.

[163] Now, I notice that you were very clear about your view, which is not entirely cheerful, on pupil referral units. Given the time, I think there are two questions that I have. The leadership and management of the poor-performing pupil referral units is really poor and I think you make that very, very clear. I wanted to know do you think that dedicated continual professional development for teachers who are within PRUs—because they are different skills that you require—would be more appropriate. And, is there such a thing, because I've not been able to find any sort of CPD, much, around anywhere, let alone for people working in PRUs?

[164] The second thing is the use in PRUs of a constantly changing series of teachers; you

know, they're supply teachers, or they're people who come out and go back in, because they're going back into a mainstream setting. So, again, those children don't have that continuity.

[165] **Ms Keane:** I'd like to say, first of all, that there are some good PRUs.

[166] **Angela Burns:** Yes; I'm sorry. We did have some very good schools.

[167] **Ms Keane:** Yes, I know. And, we've actually set it out in such a way that we've really been very, very critical of the whole sector, but they're in a minority—an increasingly small minority—because most of the PRUs we inspect every year, now, are not good. And, I think you've touched on some of the reasons why: the fact that they are technically called 'schools', but they don't operate as schools; they have a management committee and they're managed directly by the local authority. They come and they go, they pop up, they're amalgamated, they disappear. Apart from the ones that are notably good—and there are some of them—they tend to be overlooked, I think that would be the word to use in relation to your question about CPD. They are often not included in CPD. The teacher in charge is not developed as a leader. The management committee is often ineffective. The ethos is more punitive than educational.

[168] Now, these children, many of whom do have learning difficulties, in terms of special educational needs—not all of them, but many of them—obviously are among that group of pupils who, for various reasons, are about to be excluded from schools or have been excluded from schools. Around half of the children educated other than at school are in PRUs. They often have a very narrow staffing base, and the object, sometimes, is more about containment than about development. The poor ones often don't have links with mainstream education. The children are supposed to be prepared to go back into mainstream education, but those links don't exist with the curriculum and so on to enable that to happen. So, they become more about containing behavioural issues, rather than helping children to learn and manage their behaviour. I think it is a question of ethos, I think it's a question of support and management, and I think it's a question of CPD and partnerships with mainstream schools to keep them closer to the mainstream, rather than marginalising them.

[169] **Angela Burns:** Moving on from the PRUs, quite a lot of PRUs don't actually have the children in their setting, but they put them out to various organisations, and I just wondered whether you had a view on that. I've seen some that are excellent, and children might turn up, say, three mornings a week, but the rest of the time they seem to be able to do what they like, but, while they're at that setting, they can have really good and meaningful engagement. I've seen other settings where, actually, it's just completely hopeless, and the kids never turn up at all, but, because they're not in the PRU and the authority thinks that they're elsewhere, it continues. I just wonder what your view is on that.

[170] **Ms Keane:** Yes, we're quite concerned about this, because what you say reflects what we have found: that there are some very good settings that give alternative curriculum experiences to pupils and keep them on board, but it's actually quite difficult to keep track of them when they're, sort of, dispersed in various sites, and attendance can be a big issue. We are undertaking a remit this year—I don't know if you want to tell us about that remit—on this very aspect of concern.

[171] **Mr Rowlands:** Yes, I don't have anything to report on it, but you're right: of the children not in a mainstream school, only about half go to PRUs, and there are all kinds of different arrangements for the others. The term used is EOTAS, and that is exactly what the thematic report is going to look—where are they? That's not always clear, as you say. But also, is any of that provision effective or not?

[172] **Ms Keane:** We will have more to report on—or the next chief inspector will—this time next year, when they come to this committee on the back of what we find in this remit thematic.

[173] **Angela Burns:** Could I just ask one final question in terms of definition, because the Government is, rightly in my view, moving towards the term ‘additional learning need’? But, there are disputes going on in the hinterland about where additional learning need stops and where it begins. We do appear to have a significant number of children who do have behavioural issues. Now, to me, that’s an additional learning need, because it seems to me that that stops a child from being able to access school, access the national curriculum and access the social canvas of the school that helps to develop them and round off their characters. What would Estyn’s view be on where that grey area goes to?

[174] **Ms Keane:** Well, certainly the wellbeing of children is a prerequisite for effective learning, and poor behaviour is a sign that that child is not happy and not likely to learn until their behavioural, emotional, social issues are faced up to and dealt with. So, what I mentioned earlier about this element or the ethos of the punitive as opposed to the therapeutic, I think that balance needs to shift. We need to move away from the punitive view of these children having behaved badly and, therefore, an element of containment and punishment, towards a more enlightened view of what an ethos of any establishment dealing with such children should be.

11:00

[175] **Ann Jones:** I’ve got Keith, Aled and Simon, and I think that will be the end after that, because we are, actually, against the time. Sorry.

[176] **Keith Davies:** Un o’r problemau rwy’n ei gweld gyda’r plant sy’n tangyflawni nawr yw, os ydyn nhw yn yr unedau yna, efallai nad oes neuadd yna, dim campfa, dim labordy na gweithdy. Pa gyfle sydd gan y plant yna? Wedyn, efallai, mewn ysgolion, pan fydd plant yn tangyflawni, nid yw’r ysgolion yn cynnig pob pwnc iddyn nhw—maen nhw’n penderfynu pa bynciau fydd ar gael i’r plant hyn. Felly, mae angen newid yr unedau, yn fy marn i, i roi mwy o gyfleoedd iddyn nhw. Fe dreiais i gael un uned ynghlwm wrth ysgol gyfun, a symud y plant wedyn i’r gampfa neu i’r gweithdy—wel, nid oedd yr ysgol eisiau i’r plant hyn ddod i mewn i’r ysgol gyfun. *So*, nid ydym ni’n chwarae’n deg gyda’r plant hyn.

Keith Davies: One of the problems that I see with the children who underachieve now is that, if they are in those units, maybe there’s no hall there, no gym, no laboratory or workshop. What opportunities do those children have? Maybe, then, in schools, when children underperform, the schools don’t offer them every subject—they decide which subjects are available to those children. So, we need to change the units, in my opinion, to give more opportunities to the children. I tried to have one unit tied in with a secondary school, and then move the children, then, to the gym or the workshop—well, the school didn’t want those children to come into the secondary school. So, we are not playing fair with these children.

[177] **Ms Keane:** Nac ydym. Yr ateb yw creu partneriaeth trwy leoli’r unedau yn agos at ysgolion, fel nad ydyn nhw mor bell o’r prif—

Ms Keane: No, we’re not. The answer is to create a partnership by locating the units very close to schools, so that they are not as far away from the main—

[178] **Keith Davies:** Maen nhw yn bell.

Keith Davies: They are far away.

[179] **Ms Keane:** Hefyd, dim ond nifer fechan o staff sydd yn yr unedau hyn yn aml iawn. Wel, nid oes ganddyn nhw eu hunain y

Ms Keane: Also, quite often, these units have only a small number of staff. Well, they themselves don’t have the qualifications to

cymwysterau i gyfro'r cwricwlwm yn llwyr. cover the whole curriculum.

[180] **Ann Jones:** Aled.

[181] **Aled Roberts:** Ar ddiwedd y cyfarfod, rwyf hefyd eisiau diolch i chi am eich gwaith a chydabod ein bod yn gwerthfawrogi'ch barn chi. Rwy'n meddwl bod hynny yn adlewyrchiad teg o beth rydych chi wedi'i gyflawni yn ystod eich swydd.

Aled Roberts: At the end of the meeting, I also want to thank you for your work and recognise that we appreciate your opinion. I think that that's a very fair reflection of what you've achieved during your term of office.

[182] A gaf i hefyd ofyn i chi—? Gwnes i fethu hefyd, Keith, am bum mlynedd, i gael ysgol i dderbyn ei bod yn derbyn uned, pan oeddwn yn arweinydd cyngor. Ond, mae yna sefyllfa'n codi hefyd lle mae yna duedd ymysg y cynghorau, wrth i rai o'r unedau yma gau, i adael i ysgolion wneud trefniadau eu hunain efo rhai asiantaethau, fel yr oedd Angela yn sôn. Pa fath o reolaeth sydd yna ar y sefyllfa yna, fel yn yr achosion rwy'n dod ar eu traws nhw, lle, i bob pwrpas, mae'r plentyn yn gofrestredig yn yr ysgol ond nad yw'n gwario awr yn yr ysgol a'i fod ar ryw fath o gwricwlwm allanol? Rwy'n cymryd eich bod chi'n ystyried hynny wrth gynnal arolwg.

Could I also ask you—? I also failed, Keith, for five years, to get a school to accept that a unit could be tied to the school, when I was a council leader. But, a situation does also arise where there is a tendency among the councils, as some of these units close, to allow schools to make their own arrangements with some agencies, as Angela mentioned. What kind of control is there of that situation, as in the cases I come across, where, to all intents and purposes, the child is registered in a school but doesn't spend an hour in school and is following some kind of external curriculum? I take it that you take that into account when you conduct an inspection.

[183] **Ms Keane:** Ydyn.

Ms Keane: Yes.

[184] **Aled Roberts:** Ond, a ydych chi'n poeni o gwbl fod y tueddiad yna'n cynyddu?

Aled Roberts: But, are you concerned that that tendency is increasing?

[185] **Ms Keane:** Byddwn i'n dweud, os yw'r plentyn yn dal ynghlwm wrth yr ysgol, mae mwy o obaith ar yr ochr dracio na phan mae'r awdurdod yn cymryd drosodd ac yn dyrannu'r plant ar draws—. Ond, dyma beth fydd ffocws y gwaith cylch gorchwyl yma.

Ms Keane: We would say that if a child is still involved with the school, there is more hope on the tracking side than if the local authority takes over and distributes the children across—. But, this is what the focus of the remit work that I talked about will be.

[186] Felly, mae'n rhaid imi ddweud, fe wnaethon ni ystyried rhyw ddwy flynedd yn ôl gwneud adroddiad annibynnol ar hyn, ar wahân i'r cylch gorchwyl, ond, fel y digwyddodd hi, nid oedd digon o adnoddau gyda ni'n fewnol i fedru ei wneud. Felly, mae hynny'n dangos ein bod ni'n sylweddoli bod yna achosion pryder ynghlwm wrth yr agwedd yma ar ddarpariaeth ar gyfer plant sydd yn syrthio trwy'r craciau, fel petai, neu mewn perygl o hynny. Wrth gwrs, nhw, wedyn, sy'n landio lan fel NEETs—y rhai sy'n mynd ar goll i'n system addysg ni, ac, ymhellach ymlaen, yn mynd ar goll mewn cymdeithas, o bosib.

So, I have to say, we considered a couple of years ago to do an independent report on this, separate to the remit work, but, as it turned out, we didn't have enough internal resources to do that. So, that shows that we do realise that there are causes for concern involved with this aspect on the provision for children who fall through the cracks, as it were, or are at risk of doing so. Of course, they, then, end up as being NEET—those who get lost in our education system, and who, later on, also get lost, possibly, in society as well.

[187] **Ann Jones:** Finally, Simon.

[188] **Simon Thomas:** Diolch. Ar yr un pwynt, rwy'n derbyn eich bod yn mynd i wneud yr adroddiad yn nes ymlaen eleni ar yr agwedd yma, ond mae rychwant profiad a lleoliad yr unedau yma, os dyna'r gair, yn fy syfrdanu, a dweud y gwir. Mae'n mynd o Geredigion, lle maen nhw'n honni nad ydyn nhw yn defnyddio unedau o'r fath, ond yn sicr maen nhw'n ynghlwm wrth yr ysgol, i rywle fel Caerdydd, lle mae'n ymddangos i fi bod unrhyw blentyn sy'n syrthio yn y bwloch yma yn cael ei allforio i asiantaethau eraill. Mae'n bosib bod hynny'n gweithio, ond mae trio cymharu p'un yw'r ffordd fwyaf teg i'r bobl ifanc yma, p'un sy'n rhoi rychwant y cwricwlwm iddyn nhw, a ph'un sydd wir yn llwyddiannus i'w stopio nhw rhag cwmpo i mewn i fod yn NEET—. Hefyd, mae ambell un o'r plant yma yn alluog, yn dalentog, ond nid ydynt jest wedi ffitio i mewn i'r ysgol. A ydych chi'n gallu rhoi unrhyw drosolwg ar hynny, yn fwy trylwyr, os liciwch chi, na'r hyn yr ydym wedi'i dderbyn hyd yma fel gwybodaeth?

[189] **Ms Keane:** Wel, byddwn ni'n trio gwneud hynny, mae'n rhaid imi ddweud. Un pwrpas fydd trio mapio beth sy'n digwydd, beth yw'r gwahanol fodolau sy'n cael eu defnyddio a beth sy'n edrych fel petai'n fwy o lwyddiant, ond nid yw'n hawdd tracio'r rhain. Mae hyd yn oed yr unedau cyfeirio disgyblion eu hunain yn agor ac yn diflannu. Nid yw pob un ohonyn nhw'n wastad yn gofrestredig, ac nid ydym yn gwybod am rai ohonyn nhw, felly mae'n anodd i ni eu tracio nhw, achos nid ydynt ar gofrestr i gychwyn. Rydym yn mynd i drio dilyn i fyny ar rai o'r *issues* yma yn y gwaith yr ydym yn mynd i'w wneud. Wedi dweud hynny, mae yna ysgolion, fel ysgol yn y Rhyl, er enghraifft, lle mae'r plant yn cael y profiadau y tu allan i'r ysgol, ond maen nhw'n tynnu nhw yn ôl ac maen nhw'n cael y cymwysterau. Mae yna nifer o ysgolion yr wyf wedi bod ynddyn nhw dros y blynyddoedd lle roedd yna gynlluniau. Roedd rhai ohonyn nhw'n cydweithio â'r hen *techs*, lle roedd yna fwy o hyn yn cael ei wneud—sef yr *alternative curriculum*, fel roeddwn nhw'n ei alw—lle roedd y tracio yn gweithio'n well. Efallai fod yna rywffaint o 'fragment-eiddio' wedi

Simon Thomas: Thank you. On the same point, I accept that you're going to do the report later on this year on this aspect, but the range of experiences and the location of these units, if that's the right word, amaze me, to tell you the truth. It goes from Ceredigion, where they claim that they don't use these kinds of units, but certainly they are tied with the school, to somewhere like Cardiff, where it appears to me that any child who falls into this gap are exported to other agencies. Maybe that works, but trying to compare which is the fairest way of dealing with these young people is, which gives them a range of curriculum, and which is successful in terms of stopping them from becoming NEET—. Also, some of these children are able and talented, but they just haven't fitted into the school. Can you give us any overview of that, more thoroughly, if you like, than what we've had so far as information?

Ms Keane: Well, we will try to do that, I have to say. One of the intentions will be to try to map out what's happening, what different models are being used and what looks as if it's more successful, but it's not easy to track these. Even the pupil referral units themselves open and then they disappear. Not all of them are registered, and we don't know about some of them, so it's difficult for us to track them, because they're not on any register to begin with. However, we're going to try to follow up on some of these issues in the work that we're going to carry out. Having said that, there are schools such as a school in Rhyl, for example, where those children have extra-curricular experiences, but they draw them back and then they get the qualifications. Many schools that I've been to over the years have plans. Some involved collaborating with the old techs, where more of this would be done—this alternative curriculum, as they called it—where the tracking would work better. There may be some fragmentation that has taken place, with things being somewhat broken up in terms of people doing what's appropriate for them to do, as they see it, but

digwydd, gyda phethau braidd ar chwâl yn nhermau bod pawb yn gwneud beth sy'n gymwys iddyn nhw i'w wneud, maen nhw'n meddwl, ond bod lle iddyn nhw ddysgu wrth beth mae pobl eraill yn ei wneud.

there is room for them to learn from what other people are doing.

[190] **Simon Thomas:** Mae'n bwysig bod yr un ddyletswydd ar yr awdurdod i olrhain hanes y plentyn—y disgybl unigol—yma lle bynnag yw ei lleoliad. Yr ymdeimlad sydd gen i ar hyn o bryd, yn sicr, yw bod, o bryd i'w gilydd, ysgubo ymaith o'r disgyblion anodd yma—a bod hynny'n stopio, a'n bod ni'n cael trosolwg cenedlaethol ar hynny, a bod yn glir ynglŷn â'r cyfrifoldeb a'r ddyletswydd, nid jest i gadw llygad ond tracio a gwybod yn union beth mae'r disgyblion yma yn ei gyflawni.

Simon Thomas: It's important that the same duty is on the authority to trace the history of the individual pupil wherever they are, in terms of setting. The feeling that I have at present is that there is from time to time a sweeping aside of these difficult pupils—that that should stop and we should have a national overview of this and be clear about the responsibility and duty not just to keep an eye on them but track and know exactly what these pupils achieve.

[191] **Ms Keane:** A'r rhai sy'n cael eu haddysgu gartref, wrth gwrs. Nid yw'r rhai yna mor hawdd i fynd atyn nhw i weld beth sy'n digwydd.

Ms Keane: And those who are taught at home, of course. They're not as easy to reach in order to see what's happening there.

[192] **Ann Jones:** Okay? The Chair has failed miserably in time management. I've cut some of the questions short, so, if there is anything afterwards, if we could write to you, perhaps, that would be good. I know that there's a debate in Plenary on 24 February, which is the first Tuesday back. So, can I say thank you very much, and can I just say, on behalf of the committee, that I want to place on record my thanks to you and your staff? You've always been ready to assist us; you've always helped Assembly Members, as many have testified today. You've also helped the committee, and I'm sure that the committee clerks and the staff, as well, would want to say thank you—they don't get an opportunity to speak at this; it's all down to me—so I'm sure I'll speak for them when I say thank you very much. Your services, as Estyn, have helped us a lot over the years, and, certainly, I think it's been your willingness and your drive that have helped us. I also wish you well for the future. I'm sure you'll take a keen interest in what happens.

[193] **Ms Keane:** I shall.

[194] **Ann Jones:** I hope you will, anyway. [*Laughter.*] If you think we're drifting off course, or that we're rudderless, which happens with me in the chair, sometimes, do tell us—do drop us a line.

[195] **Ms Keane:** I'll write you a letter. [*Laughter.*]

[196] **Ann Jones:** Yes, write a letter; that's what everybody seems to do. Can I say thank you very much? We have appreciated it. I say, on behalf of all the committee, diolch yn fawr—thank you very much.

[197] **Ms Keane:** Thank you; I've enjoyed it.

[198] **Ann Jones:** Good.

[199] **Ms Keane:** Thank you very much—diolch yn fawr.

[200] **Ann Jones:** Thank you.

11:08

**Papurau i'w Nodi
Papers to Note**

[201] **Ann Jones:** There are a couple of papers to note, committee. Can we note those?

11:09

**Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd o'r
Cyfarfod
Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public from the
Meeting**

[202] **Ann Jones:** Can we move into private, under 17.42?

Cynnig:

Motion:

y pwyllgor yn penderfynu gwahardd y cyhoedd o weddill y cyfarfod yn unol â Rheol Sefydlog 17.42(vi).

the committee resolves to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 17.42(vi).

*Cynigiwyd y cynnig.
Motion moved.*

[203] **Ann Jones:** Okay, thank you very much.

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.
Motion agreed.*

*Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 11:09.
The public part of the meeting ended at 11:09.*