



Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru The National Assembly for Wales

Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc The Children and Young People Committee

**Dydd Iau, 29 Mawrth 2012
Thursday, 29 March 2012**

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Motion under Standing Order No. 17.42(vi) to Resolve to Exclude the Public from the Meeting

Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynddi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal,
cynhwysir cyfieithiad Saesneg o gyfraniadau yn y Gymraeg.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee.
In addition, an English translation of Welsh speeches is included.

Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol
Committee members in attendance

Angela Burns	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Christine Chapman	Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Labour (Committee Chair)
Jocelyn Davies	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Suzy Davies	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Julie Morgan	Llafur Labour
Jenny Rathbone	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, Estyn Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales, Estyn
Meilyr Rowlands	Cyfarwyddwr Strategol, Estyn Strategic Director, Estyn

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

Helen Finlayson	Clerc Clerk
Claire Griffiths	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Sian Hughes	Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service

Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.13 a.m.
The meeting began at 9.13 a.m.

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions

[1] **Christine Chapman:** Bore da and welcome to the Assembly's Children and Young People's Committee. It is the last meeting of this term. I remind you to switch off any BlackBerrys, pagers or mobile phones because they affect the sound system. We have had apologies today from Keith Davies and Lynne Neagle.

9.14 a.m.

Craffu ar Adroddiad Blynyddol Estyn 2010-11
Scrutiny of Estyn's Annual Report 2010-11

[2] **Christine Chapman:** I welcome our visitors from Estyn. Would you introduce yourselves for the record?

[3] **Ms Keane:** I am Ann Keane, the chief inspector at Estyn.

[4] **Mr Brown:** I am Simon Brown, a strategic director at Estyn.

[5] **Mr Rowlands:** I am Meilyr Rowlands, a strategic director at Estyn.

[6] **Christine Chapman:** Welcome to you all, and thank you very much for giving up your time. We have the Estyn report and we debated this in Plenary last week. I know that you have provided a paper as well. If you are happy, we will go straight into questions.

[7] **Ms Keane:** That is fine.

9.15 a.m.

[8] **Christine Chapman:** I will start with a general question. We know that there are new inspection arrangements; have they improved on the previous inspection framework?

[9] **Ms Keane:** Yes, I believe so. I thought, if you asked this question, that I would give you a quick summary of the features of the new inspection framework, so that members of the committee are fully apprised of how different it is from the previous framework. Then, if you want to ask about its impact subsequently, we can go on to discuss that.

[10] One of the notable features of the new inspection framework is that inspections of schools have, from September 2010, been led by Estyn—which means mostly led by HM Inspectorate of Education, although we do use some additional inspectors. However, we have control over the whole inspection process, or we will have from this September. What we did was to bring in-house 50% of the school inspections in September 2010-11, which is the year of the annual report, and 75% during this current academic year, and from September 2012 we will bring 100% in-house. That means that Estyn has quality control over all the inspection reports, which means that we edit them and check the evidence against judgments. In the previous cycle, we were not able to do that because we contracted out all the inspections and they were, in effect, owned by the contracted companies. We will cease to use those companies from the summer of this year. So, that is an important new feature.

[11] The next most important feature is the two aspects of the common inspection framework and its application that builds capacity in the sector. One is to do with the requirement now, for the first time, for schools and other providers to undertake self-evaluation, not as something that they do as a quick report just before an inspection, but as something they do naturally as part of the life and work of the school or provider over time. We have published, for the first time, manuals for providers for each sector on how to undertake self-evaluation. That guidance is not prescriptive: 'First you do this, then you do this'. It can be customised for each provider and school to use. This guidance builds capacity in schools because it is intended to help teachers, headteachers and governors to understand the processes of self-evaluation.

[12] We also now use peer inspectors on all inspections. These peers are practising headteachers or deputies from other schools who join the team as full inspectors. We train them: they have to pass part 1 of the training, which is a four-day course. Then, there is another part of the training where they undertake an inspection with us and they are assessed,

and when they pass that they become peer inspectors. In the last cycle, we used peer inspectors, but a peer inspector was on the team only for around 50% of schools. This time, we are pretty much hitting 100% for peer inspectors. As you can imagine, that gives us two things. First, it gives us a better level of credibility, because the headteachers who are on the inspection team are the ones who are dealing with the issues to do with implementing policies in their own schools—they know exactly what is going on. Secondly, it gives us the ability to bring more and more headteachers and people into our inspection process so that they then have a better understanding of how to undertake self-evaluation in their own schools. We hope that that will give them stronger powers of leadership when they go back to school.

[13] Then, we use questionnaires for parents and learners. In the past, we used questionnaires for parents, but not for learners. This time, we are using questionnaires for learners. We promised that we would write shorter, more accessible reports, and we have moved towards that quite well. I would not say that they are the most readable things on the planet, but they are better than they used to be. They are shorter, and we have recently moved the data analysis section from the beginning of the report to an appendix. I have had some e-mails from parents saying that we had said that these were going to be more readable, but that they were bumping into lots of heavy data stuff early on and that it was putting them off. We have not removed it altogether, but we have put that little bit of technical data analysis into an appendix so that it reads more easily.

[14] We also have much shorter notice periods. It used to be roughly three months. The notice periods are an issue of some interest to many people. At the moment, we have a notice period of four weeks. The main reason for bringing it down to four weeks is that there is a regulation that states that governors have to give parents three weeks' notice of a parents' meeting, pre-inspection. Therefore, the four weeks is to give governors enough notice to send out notices to parents to enable them to come to a parents' meeting the night before the inspection starts.

[15] The next feature that is very different from what we used to do in the past is to do with becoming more proportionate and intervening in inverse proportion to success. To do that, we have set up a shorter core inspection for everyone and then a follow-up inspection for those providers and schools whose performance we feel we need to follow up, either because they are in special measures or in need of significant improvement or because Estyn will monitor them. Alternatively, with those that we are least concerned about, but where we still have concerns, we ask the local authority to report back to us on progress in a year. You probably know, because it is in the annual report, that roughly 5% of schools are in the category of 'schools causing concern'; roughly 20% require Estyn monitoring, which means that there are some quite serious concerns but not so serious that they require external intervention, which is what schools causing concern need in order to move forward; and we have asked local authorities to monitor roughly 20%.

[16] The one other new feature of the common inspection framework I will mention is that, previously, we reported on each subject in the national curriculum. For every school and every provider, there would be a report on English, Welsh, mathematics, history, geography, science and all the other subjects. Now, we focus much more on skills and the performance of particular groups of pupils. In other words, we are trying to get schools to consider how they are doing with looked-after children, with the children who are entitled to free school meals, with ethnic minority children and so on, to look at the attainment of those children as a group and track them so that they can adapt the curriculum and the requirements and the teaching of those groups of children. We did not do that in the past.

[17] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you, Ann. We want to delve a bit more into the different groups, and I know that other Members want to comment on this.

[18] **Jocelyn Davies:** I just wish to comment that I am very pleased that the category of 'satisfactory' has gone and been replaced with 'adequate', because the word 'satisfactory' meant a lot of things to a lot of people and that is a real improvement. You did not mention it, but I wanted to comment on that.

[19] **Ms Keane:** No, I should have mentioned that. Thank you for reminding me. I should have mentioned that we moved from a five-point numerical grade scale to a four-point scale of judgments, from 'excellent' to 'good' to 'adequate' to 'unsatisfactory'. 'Adequate' means 'not good enough', basically.

[20] **Jocelyn Davies:** Yes, and I think that that is better for parents, particularly when they are reading the report, because they can make a better judgment on how the school is doing. I think that the word 'satisfactory' sometimes sent the wrong message.

[21] **Ms Keane:** I agree. The implication was that things were fine. However, the word 'adequate' suggests that there are good features and shortcomings and that things are barely okay.

[22] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you for outlining that. It is very useful. You talked about headteachers, and you have obviously had a dialogue with them and they seem very happy with the new arrangements. What about feedback from pupils and parents and other teachers? What has been the feedback from them?

[23] **Ms Keane:** We said that we would do a mid-cycle review of the arrangements, and, with stakeholders, we have undertaken a review. We said that we would not radically change the shape of the common inspection framework halfway through the cycle, but that we would make amendments to reflect, for example, new Welsh Government policies or initiatives. However, the general feedback from stakeholders is that they like the new approach, and I include parents in that. I get a lot more mail from parents now than I used to, which I think is a good thing.

[24] **Christine Chapman:** So, there is more engagement then.

[25] **Ms Keane:** There is more engagement.

[26] **Christine Chapman:** Do you think it is making a difference?

[27] **Ms Keane:** A difference to the standard of education?

[28] **Christine Chapman:** Obviously, the feedback is good, but is it having a beneficial impact on standards for example? It may be early days, but—

[29] **Ms Keane:** I believe so. Wales needs to improve on literacy and numeracy, and I do not just mean basic skills, although I include basic skills in that. I also include the development of higher order literacy skills that are transferrable across all subjects, which you need to study all subjects and do well in the Programme for International Student Assessment, because PISA is a very fair test of those skills. Our focus on skills is making schools focus on skills, and it is making schools ask 'Okay, I may be covering the content of history in the national curriculum, but am I making sure that these pupils can read and write at an age-appropriate level?'. We are not there yet, but we are having an impact. For example, we recently held conferences on teaching literacy in schools—one in north Wales, one in Swansea and two in Cardiff, and we had enough interest from teachers, literacy co-ordinators and heads to have filled those conferences three times over. It was about sharing good practice—they came to those conferences wanting to find out how they could improve their practice, and the positivity of that response was very strong. I believe that we are driving that

through the inspection system.

[30] **Christine Chapman:** That is very positive; thank you. I am going to bring in Jenny Rathbone for the next question.

[31] **Jenny Rathbone:** Your report shows that there have been improvements across all three key stages—1, 2 and 3. How confident are you that that is a sign of sustainable improvement rather than just the particular performance of those cohorts?

[32] **Ms Keane:** I would say that we have noted particular improvements in the foundation phase. It would be invidious to make direct comparisons between the grades we were awarding in the last cycle and the grades we are awarding now, because we have changed the criteria for judging things and we have changed the focus. Nevertheless, looking at our five-point grade system, I would say that, by and large, what has happened is that there has been a big drop in the award of excellence, for instance, so I would say that—

[33] **Jenny Rathbone:** I was actually talking about pupils' performance and the assessment of their level of attainment.

[34] **Ms Keane:** Do you mean the end of key stage—

[35] **Jenny Rathbone:** Key stage 1, key stage 2 and key stage 3.

[36] **Ms Keane:** Our issue with those is that we are not convinced of the reliability of the teacher assessments at the end of key stage 2. As we state in our report, we have found that, with regard to our focus on skills, there are some shortcomings among quite a large minority of schools. For example, with regard to pupils leaving primary school, we have found that roughly 30% of primary schools we inspected last year, as reported in the annual report, have recommendations and shortcomings in literacy, particularly in writing, and, to a lesser extent, in reading. So, in our findings, we are more critical in our inspections of schools than has been the case in the past. That is not based on the end-of-key-stage teacher assessments, which we find do not always reflect standards as we find them, but on our observation of teaching and learning in classes and on scrutiny of the work that pupils do. It is also based on talking to students and pupils about how well they are doing and how well they understand what they have been doing. That is an independent judgment on standards. It starts with the assessment of the data of end-of-key-stage teacher assessments when we start our inspections, but what we report on are the standards we find in the schools we inspect, which are a different thing.

9.30 a.m.

[37] **Jenny Rathbone:** That sounds like an argument for having external assessment at key stage 2, as they have in England.

[38] **Ms Keane:** It is a strong argument for having stronger external checks and moderation at the end of key stage 2. We have written a remit report on this.

[39] **Angela Burns:** Good morning; it is nice to see you again. I am particularly interested in the fact that all the evidence in your report shows that girls outperform boys significantly in most of the stages. I want to ask two questions. First, have you seen any beginnings of change in that? Secondly, has Estyn done any comparative study of the different teaching methodologies you may find in different schools? I am not talking about the foundation phase, per se, but how different schools, including secondary schools, may teach boys differently. I know that it may sound odd to talk about teaching literacy and numeracy to a child when they are at secondary school but, as you have already said, we need to do that. So,

it is a double-barrelled question.

[40] **Ms Keane:** The gender gap is still there. It is there internationally by the way; this is not a Wales issue. There are issues about how boys and girls develop, which may underlie some of these matters. A few years ago, we published a report on the gender gap, which noted what boys find engages them. They tend to like more competitive activities, more team activities, they like learning using computers and technology, and they like active learning, which is why the foundation phase has gone down very well with boys. We also found that schools that tried to improve boys' literacy, in the course of introducing teaching methods that were very focused on improving literacy, also had the effect of improving girls' literacy. So, the attainment and achievement of both increased, but the gender gap persisted. Some of the teaching methods that improve the literacy of boys also have the effect of improving the literacy levels of girls. It is difficult. We did an overview of the research in this area on the gender gap, and it is difficult to pin down. It is something that seems pretty universal in the developed world. I would not say that there are different methods that you could use, because you could argue that it would disadvantage the girls by not allowing them to have the benefit of a focus on literacy in school. So, it would be very difficult to have a controlled group of girls where you did not allow them to experience these exciting new methods that you were using with the boys.

[41] I have mentioned Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Cwm Garw in Bridgend, which is a Welsh-medium school, where they had a real big push on boys' literacy. They engaged in the Read a Million Words initiative, they used a Bridgend reading initiative with local schools, they also put into the curriculum a lot of competitive team activities to keep the boys engaged and set challenging tasks and involved active learning in key stage 2. They also ran quite a big range of physical exercise programmes, which obviously meant that a lot of the boys were responding very well and were therefore more engaged in school activities and did better in all sorts of ways in schools. There are ways of doing it, and Ysgol Cwm Garw had closed the gender gap, to some extent, when we last looked at it.

[42] **Christine Chapman:** Before I bring Angela back in, I want to test your views on this. Obviously, it is excellent that the gap is narrowing, but do you feel that there is any danger at all of girls being, not forgotten, but slightly marginalised in the push to get the boys achieving better. This has always been the case, and I wonder whether we have the balance right. Are we taking our eye off the ball as far as the girls are concerned?

[43] **Ms Keane:** No. Any extra teacher attention on anything and any new initiative have a halo effect and all pupils will respond well. Few schools would take the decision to exclude girls from any initiative to improve literacy. So, as I said, when they have a push on literacy that is oriented to some of these things that are better at engaging boys, by, for example, ensuring that the fiction and non-fiction stock in the school library and the reading materials they use are boy-friendly, perhaps with a focus on sports and sporting heroes and more non-fiction texts—girls are more likely to enjoy fiction—it is important that they do not deplete the stock of material that appeals to girls, so that they do not do this at the expense of girls. However, any big focus on literacy for boys tends to have an impact on girls as well.

[44] **Angela Burns:** Can you give us a quick reminder whether that gender gap closes more in the secondary sector than it does in the primary sector? In that case, do you feel that there is any correlation between what the gender of the teaching staff tends to be in the secondary sector as opposed to the gender of the teaching staff, or the mix of the gender of the teachers—I am trying to say this in a politically correct way, but you know what I am talking about. There are more male teachers in secondary schools than there are in primary schools, is that not true?

[45] **Ms Keane:** I will say that there are male teachers in Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Cwm

Garw. However, I would not like to speculate, because there have been some studies on this, and I do not think that they have come to a clear conclusion. In a common-sense way, it is obviously healthy for boys to see male role models in positions of leadership in the context of the curriculum. However, even if a school does not have male teachers, it can still do its best to bring in male members of those boys' families, which is also a good ploy that a lot of schools use. The gender gap tends to persist through the key stages, and even at GCSE and A-levels girls will tend to do better in languages. Boys will tend to do better at maths and science. Perhaps you would like to add something, Meilyr.

[46] **Mr Rowlands:** It is quite complex. The gender gap tends to get wider with age, and it exists, apparently, even before children go into schools and gets steadily wider. That would seem to indicate that the gender balance of staff in primary and secondary schools does not, overall, make a huge difference. As Ann said, where schools have bucked the trend, it is because they have identified that boys are underachieving by benchmarking their performance against other similar schools and then putting in specific initiatives to try to improve it. When that happens, usually, as we have said, girls improve as well, because those initiatives tend to identify individualised learning pathways for children and that tends to benefit girls as much as boys. You can check that the girls are not being disadvantaged, even if the gap is closing, because you can compare how they are doing with equivalent girls in other schools.

[47] You have a similar issue with disadvantaged children; that gap is also difficult to close and tends to widen as children get older. No-one really knows the reason for this, but people generally think that there is a correlation between these performance gaps and literacy problems. For children who start off disadvantaged, either because of their socioeconomic background or because of the tendency of boys to have lower levels of literacy from the beginning, it snowballs as they move on through the education system. So, it is important to tackle that literacy issue at the beginning, because that seems to be the key to these different types of gaps.

[48] **Ms Keane:** More boys than girls are identified as having special educational needs, and boys are more likely to be excluded from school. Literacy and engagement are the key things to help to buck that trend. Interestingly, when we were doing the gender gap report, I looked at the examination outcomes for languages at the highest levels and found that some boys do achieve. So, it is not a universal thing; some boys do achieve the best grades and the best outcomes in languages.

[49] **Christine Chapman:** This is a fascinating area, Ann, but I do not think that we have time to cover it all, because we have quite a lot of other areas to get through today. Could you share with us any of those reports with regard to disadvantage, which you and Meilyr talked about, and the reasons? It would be very useful if you could share that with the committee. Perhaps you could write to us with that.

[50] **Ms Keane:** Yes, we will. Would you like us to write to you with a summary of findings from different reports?

[51] **Christine Chapman:** It would be really good if you could do that.

[52] **Jocelyn Davies:** I feel a little uncomfortable that we are saying that boys enjoy outdoor play activities more than girls, having raised a boy and girl myself. If we say this at the foundation phase, does it become a self-fulfilling prophecy? There may well be an awful lot of women teachers in primary schools, but the headteachers are men. So, those disadvantages, when you become an adult, seem not to persist, because the pay gap, of course, goes the other way. I just wanted to put that on the record.

[53] Also, is it possible that if there is this specific sort of learning difficulty, the multi-

sensory approach, with movement, is of assistance? So, rather than it being a gender thing, could it possibly be to do with a multi-sensory approach? That is, because of the activity, it has nothing to do with gender, but is actually to do with a specific learning difficulty and perhaps this idea about the techniques of teaching might be an issue. I just wanted to put it on the record that I am quite uncomfortable with the way we just accept that boys want to do activities and to be outside and moving and that what they do has to be exciting, but girls do not want that. I do not accept that.

[54] **Christine Chapman:** This is quite old research.

[55] **Ms Keane:** The girls benefit as well from the activity; that is the point that I am making.

[56] **Jocelyn Davies:** Okay. Fine.

[57] **Christine Chapman:** A lot of studies have been done about boys being quite noisy in the classroom and getting a lot more attention from the teachers. So, of course, the girls could have needs, but they could be marginalised because they are quieter. I think that there are a lot of issues. However, I am sure that the committee would appreciate it if you could send us a report or some references. It would be very good to see them, if you are happy to do that.

[58] **Ms Keane:** It is very difficult to unpack what is innate and predisposition and what is the result of early social conditioning. That is where you go to with these, because—

[59] **Julie Morgan:** That is a big question.

[60] **Ms Keane:** Yes, it is an enormous question, because you are quite right: it is very easy to accept these stereotypes, and you then fall too easily into labelling, and that sets expectations, which in turn creates its own problems. To a large extent, children's early learning has a lot to do with gender, and that happens very early on. There are certain social expectations that all of us reinforce, without knowing that we do it. Parents certainly do that. There is the whole blue and pink thing—right from the start, you are labelling.

[61] **Christine Chapman:** There is quite a debate on that, is there not? I am going to move us on now to other areas. Jocelyn wants to talk about leadership.

[62] **Jocelyn Davies:** Yes. You mentioned that many of the weaknesses can be traced back to a failure of leadership. I suppose the question is this: is there a lack of leadership in all tiers of education?

9.45 a.m.

[63] **Ms Keane:** I would say that leadership could be strengthened in all tiers of education, although we have some sector-leading practice in all tiers of education as well. I mentioned that we are awarding 'excellent' status less than we used to. We ask three questions: how good are standards; how good is provision; and how good are leadership and management? If leadership is not strong, even where there are good teachers, good practice is not necessarily sustainable over time. You can have individual class teachers or individual subject teachers who do a good job, but if at the top of that school they are not setting expectations, ethos, whole-school systems, performance management, and there is not sound self-evaluation, then that good practice is not shared and there is not a shared understanding of what the whole curriculum is delivering for pupils throughout that institution. So, we would like to see more of a focus on leadership that focuses on the core business of schools and providers to deliver high-quality teaching and learning.

[64] **Jocelyn Davies:** I assume that governors are seen as leaders and so this would apply to them as well.

[65] **Ms Keane:** Yes, they are.

[66] **Jocelyn Davies:** Do you therefore include the inspection of the decision-making processes around governors in relation to your inspections?

[67] **Ms Keane:** Yes, we do. We meet the chair of governors and some other governors, and we look at the minutes of governing body meetings. We ask the governors searching questions to test their understanding of the data about the performance of that school. That is the first step. The next step is to ask them what they do with those data. We have found that, in a quarter of schools, governors either do not know what the data on performance are, or, if they do know what the data are, they are not using them to challenge the school robustly.

[68] **Jocelyn Davies:** If leadership is so key to improving standards, what can be done to improve leadership skills?

[69] **Ms Keane:** We need to invest in building capacity in our school leadership. I know that the consortia are leading the way on this with the notion of system leaders, which has come from the school effectiveness framework. The consortia will have set up their school improvement services across the four regions by September. So, those system leaders, who are existing good headteachers, are expected to offer support across the system. That is one way of doing it. Another way of doing it might be to look at ways of strengthening leadership through bringing together heads on some kind of training and to have deliberate planning nationally for training of that kind. Certainly, we know that there are schools where there is good practice. A lot has been said about sharing best practice. On our website, we signpost case studies of schools and other providers where practice in leadership is good. Some schools are more willing and less defensive about this than others, but some do not like to be thought of as falling short and might not be interested in following up best practice. So, I think that there is a case to be made for looking at how we can build further capacity in leadership across Wales.

[70] **Christine Chapman:** It is sometimes down to personalities and the way in which they view their own training needs. That seems to be a bit of a problem. If you have one headteacher who is not amenable to further training or awareness-raising of best practice, what would you do then?

[71] **Ms Keane:** The idea of the consortia and the system leaders in the consortia is to target exactly that issue. Obviously, it has not really kicked in yet. We are involved with the Department for Education and Skills in discussions about system-leader training.

[72] **Christine Chapman:** Okay. I want to bring in Jenny.

[73] **Jenny Rathbone:** The governors' role is to be the critical friend of the school leadership and to set challenging targets for them. Has Estyn considered training governors so that they are clearer about their remit and what is expected of them? It is really quite difficult for a parent, when they are elected, to get up to speed on what is required if they are not involved in some aspect of performance management in their day job. That is very challenging. Given the shortcomings of many local authorities, based on the inspections that you have done this year, would Estyn consider providing that training directly?

[74] **Ms Keane:** Yes, indeed; we would be happy to consider it. Governor training should be mandatory. It should focus on data analysis. I know that governors are volunteers, and I have spoken to groups of governors in conferences organised by governors many times. I take

my hat off to them for the effort that they put into supporting their schools. I think that the emphasis has been a bit too much on support and less on the challenge side of things, but I agree that there should be mandatory training for governors.

[75] We gave an example of good practice in Ysgol Emmanuel in Rhyl in the annual report. That school outlines what is good practice for governors. Governors are associated with particular aspects of delivery. For example, one is linked to the co-ordinator for literacy in the school. He or she gets involved in how the co-ordinator sets out work plans, and looks at the work of the children. That governor gets fully involved in understanding the work of that co-ordinator before the governing body discusses and quality-assures the co-ordinator's work and the progress in literacy. The governors look at the data from the tracking of the pupils and there are days when the teachers and governors come together and discuss the challenges—it is not even about challenges, but about a journey of improvement. Many schools are doing well and are making an effort and have got so far, but the question is how they can move on further, because on a journey of improvement you never arrive at your destination, because there are always ways in which to improve.

[76] So, yes, governors should get training, which should be mandatory. I also think that all governors should have a set of data presented to them in a way that unpacks the implications of those data. There are a lot of data about schools, some of which are very technical, but a good statistician or local authority analyst will be able to—they already do this in some authorities—present the data to governors in a way that explains the implications of those data and gives them the questions that they should be asking.

[77] **Christine Chapman:** On training, I think that the Government is looking to make it mandatory under the school standards Bill, although I am not sure. However, it is certainly on the agenda.

[78] **Ms Keane:** It is on the agenda. Estyn would be perfectly willing to discuss an input into that training.

[79] **Mr Brown:** As you mentioned local authorities, one issue that we have picked up on our local authority work, and this is linked to what Ann was saying about governors, is the ability of elected members on scrutiny committees to challenge and their understanding of the data sets that are presented. One area for improvement that we picked up in our local authority inspections is that some authorities do not give their elected members sufficiently robust information for them to be able to carry out their scrutiny role effectively.

[80] Talking about training, the reason why I mention that is because we talked to the Welsh Government two weeks ago about setting up a training programme for cabinet leads and the chairs of the scrutiny committees after the election. We would train them on the use of the data provided and on the sort of questions to ask in their scrutiny role. In our local authority inspections, we now use a common data set that comes from Welsh Government—they are the same data that the local authority has and that we have. Therefore, when we inspect, we all focus on the same type of data and benchmarks and so on. We find, when we undertake inspections and talk to elected members, that some are not as familiar with those data sets as we might expect them to be.

[81] **Christine Chapman:** I must apologise to Members because we have a lot of specific questions that I know all Members want to ask, but I want to move on to another area now. Suzy wants to come in first.

[82] **Suzy Davies:** I will try to keep it short. You said in the report that the quality of teaching and learning—which you say is the core purpose of schools—varies in the majority of schools. What is it that makes a competent teacher better and what makes a teacher worse?

[83] **Ms Keane:** What makes a competent teacher better in a school setting is the willingness to keep on learning and a refusal to be defensive about the fact that we are all learning, all of the time. Therefore, nobody's practice is perfect. Accepting that principle would help to make competent teachers better, because you sometimes get a defensive attitude. After we go in to observe classes, it is our practice to have a professional dialogue with that teacher. The aim of that is to get the teacher to analyse their own work, how they work and to see ways in which they might improve or to see why something in a particular lesson did not work well enough. It is our aim to help that teacher to become more competent. The experience of inspection, self-evaluation, and peer-evaluation along the same lines in a school can help competent teachers to get better. By peer evaluation, I mean the classroom observation of teachers across a school from different departments, to support each other in terms of development. That is one thing.

[84] Professional learning communities can help teachers to get better. I am greatly in favour of building capacity among the teaching population, as opposed to having a model where you think, 'Well, we will train the teachers to do this, we will train the teachers to do that'. It must be, to use some jargon, co-construction. In other words, a teacher—or indeed, anybody—is more likely to put something into practice if they have been part of the thinking about how to do that. The best possible approach for that is school-based.

[85] What could make a competent teacher less competent is if they were in a school without leadership to encourage them to do that. Then, the tendency might be to sink back into complacency and cosiness because they are not being challenged and are not moving on. I had a discussion with one teacher who said, 'I have been teaching like this for 20 years; I do not intend to change now'. That was when I was running a department. Ultimately, we changed that teacher's modus operandi through an exchange. He went to work in another school. He was taken out of the situation and given a different experience, and he came back a better teacher for that.

[86] You must have a headteacher who thinks about how competent his or her teachers are across the piece, how that performance is managed, and how he or she can help that performance to improve. Leadership makes the difference. Without it, a competent teacher might sink into cosy complacency. A competent teacher can be improved by jointly engaging in a professional dialogue about how they can improve performance and delivery in that school across the board, led by a strong leadership team.

[87] **Suzy Davies:** I do not have any supplementary questions, as you have already answered them.

[88] **Christine Chapman:** Two more Members want to ask questions on this topic and then I will move on because I am conscious of time, but thank you for your responses.

[89] **Simon Thomas:** Mae gennyf un cwestiwn penodol. Sut mae'r radd meistr arfaethedig yn ffitio i mewn gyda gwella sgiliau athrawon? Ydych wedi cael unrhyw *input* i lunio cynnwys y radd honno? A ydych yn gweld ei bod yn adeiladu ar yr hyfforddiant a'r cysyniadau yr ydych newydd eu hamlinellu i Suzy Davies, sef agwedd y proffesiwn bod angen gwella o hyd a pheidio â bod yn amddiffynol, oherwydd rydym oll wedi gweld athrawon yn gwneud hynny mewn gwahanol agweddau o fywyd

Simon Thomas: I have one specific question. How does the proposed master's degree fit in with improving teachers' skills? Have you had any input in formulating the content of that degree? Do you think that it builds on the training and the concepts that you have just outlined to Suzy Davies, namely the attitude within the profession that we need continuous improvement and not to get defensive, because we have all seen teachers do so in various aspects of public life?

cyhoeddus?

[90] **Ms Keane:** Roeddwn yn falch o weld mai meysydd y cwrs gradd arfaethedig yw'r rhai a nodwyd yn adroddiad blynyddol y llynedd, sef bod angen mewnbwn ar athrawon sy'n cychwyn ar eu gyrfa. Felly, rwy'n hapus gyda'r meysydd a gafodd eu dewis. Yn rhagarweiniad yr adroddiad blynyddol diwethaf, nodwyd beth yw anghenion athrawon newydd. Yn y gorffennol, mae athrawon newydd wedi negodi beth sydd angen arnynt ar gyfer eu datblygiad. Mae hynny'n iawn, i raddau, ond, nid yw'n ateb y gofynion mawr, hynny yw, pethau fel llythrennedd a sut mae dysgu athrawon i ddelio gyda phlant ag anghenion arbennig, oherwydd yn y dosbarthiadau gallu cymysg, mae plant ag anghenion arbennig. Mae hynny'n dipyn o her i athrawon sydd newydd gychwyn eu gyrfa, felly rwy'n hapus iawn gyda'r meysydd yn y cwrs gradd.

10.00 a.m.

[91] **Aled Roberts:** Rydych chi wedi sôn am broblemau lle mae diffyg arweiniad, ond ydych chi hefyd yn ymwybodol o achosion lle mae'r arweinydd yn ceisio gwella'r sefyllfa, ond nad yw'r athrawon yn derbyn bod hawl efallai i'r arweinyddion neu eu cyd-athrawon fynd i mewn i ddosbarthiadau a mynegi barn ynglŷn â safon y dysgu?

[92] **Ms Keane:** Ydw, rwy'n ymwybodol o sefyllfaoedd felly, ac rwyf o'r farn bod gormod o bwyslais efallai yn cael ei roi ar yr angen i fynd mewn i'r dosbarth o hyd. Rwyf o'r farn y gall pennaeth adran neu bennaeth ysgol greu system o edrych yn fanwl ar sampl o waith plant a deall yn union sut mae athrawon yn perfformio o ddadansoddi'r samplau hynny. Felly, os ydych yn ddirprwy bennaeth mewn ysgol uwchradd, er enghraifft, byddai angen system, yn ystod y flwyddyn, o edrych ar bob adran yn ei thro ac edrych ar samplau o waith plant rydych yn gwybod sydd dan anfantais; plant sydd yn gwneud yn dda a phlant sy'n dod o unrhyw un o'r grwpiau dan anfantais, ac wedyn edrych ar adran arall a gweld sut mae'r adran honno'n gwneud yn well nag adran arall gydag union yr un plant. Wrth wneud hynny, rydych yn deall pob peth am berfformiad athrawon unigol o fewn adrannau. Nid yw'n

Ms Keane: I was pleased to see that the fields included in the proposed degree course were those identified in last year's annual report, namely that teachers need input when they are starting their careers. Therefore, I am happy with the fields that were selected. The foreword of the last annual report identified the needs of new teachers. In the past, new teachers have negotiated what they need for their development. That is fine, to an extent, but, it does not meet the greater requirements, namely things such as literacy and teaching teachers how to deal with children who have special needs, because in the mixed-ability classes, there are children with special needs. That is quite a challenge for teachers who have just started their careers, so I am very happy with the fields in the degree course.

Aled Roberts: You have mentioned problems where there is a lack of leadership, but are you also aware of cases where the leader is endeavouring to improve the situation, but the teachers do not accept that those leaders or fellow teachers have a right to come into the classroom and express an opinion about the standard of teaching?

Ms Keane: Yes, I am aware of those kinds of situations, and I am of the opinion that there might be too much emphasis on the need to go into the classroom all the time. I am of the opinion that a head of department or head of a school can create a system of looking in detail at samples of children's work and understanding exactly how teachers are performing by analysing those samples. So, if you are a deputy head in a secondary school, for example, you would need a system, during the year, of looking at every department in turn and at samples of the work of children who you know are disadvantaged; children who are doing well, and children who come from any of those disadvantaged groups, and then look at another department and see why it is doing better than another department with exactly the same children. In doing that, you understand everything about the performance of individual teachers within

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departments. It is not necessary to go in and observe classes.

[93] **Aled Roberts:** Symudaf ymlaen at lythrennedd, rhifedd ac ysgrifennu. Mae'ch adroddiad chi'n nodi nad oes digon o addysgu uniongyrchol ynglŷn â darllen ac ysgrifennu o fewn y cyfnod sylfaen, er mai ond lleiafrif yr ydych yn sôn amdanynt. Oes angen rhoi mwy o bwyslais ar y sgiliau hyn o fewn y cyfnod sylfaen?

Aled Roberts: I will move on to literacy, numeracy and writing skills. Your report notes that there is not enough direct teaching on reading and writing in the foundation phase, although you are only talking about a minority of settings. Does more emphasis need to be placed on these skills within the foundation phase?

[94] **Ms Keane:** Mae'r rhan fwyaf o'r ymarferwyr yn y cyfnod sylfaen yn cael y cydbwysedd yn iawn rhwng y mewnbwn o sgiliau a chreu sefyllfaoedd lle mae'r plant yn dysgu drwy weithgareddau. Fodd bynnag, mae angen y mewnbwn hwnnw o sgiliau, ac rydych yn iawn i ddweud nad oedd y mewnbwn o sgiliau hwnnw mewn lleiafrif o ysgolion, fel yr oedd y plant yn mynd yn hŷn yn enwedig, yn ddigonol o safbwynt darllen ac ysgrifennu. Cynhyrchom adroddiad ar arolwg o lythrennedd yn y cyfnod sylfaen a dyna le mae'r canfyddiadau yna yn deillio. Felly, byddwn yn dweud bod angen gwneud yn siŵr bod y mewnbwn yno, ac efallai bydd y fframweithiau llythrennedd a rhifedd yn help yn hyn o beth, gan fod y fframweithiau hynny yn mynd i gychwyn gyda phlant tair oed, yn mynd i fyny, ar hyn o bryd, at blant 14 oed.

Ms Keane: The majority of practitioners in the foundation phase get the balance right between the input of skills and creating situations in which children learn through activities. However, that input of skills is needed, and you are right to say that the input of those skills, in a minority of schools, as the children got older in particular, was not sufficient in terms of reading and writing. We produced a report on a survey of literacy in the foundation phase and that is where those findings stem from. Therefore, I would say that we need to ensure that that input is there, and perhaps the frameworks for numeracy and literacy will be a help in this regard, because those frameworks are going to start with three-year old children, going up to, at present, 14-year-old children.

[95] **Aled Roberts:** Mae'r adroddiad hefyd yn dweud bod problemau—rydym eisoes wedi crybwyll hyn yn y Senedd—ynglŷn ag oedran cronolegol ac oedran darllen plant. Sonioch yn gynharach am yr asesiadau athrawon. Pam nad yw'r ddau beth yn rhoi'r un darlun? Mae'r asesiadau, o'r hyn y deallaf, yn datgan mai dim ond tua 17% o'r disgyblion sydd ar eu hôl hi o ran darllen.

Aled Roberts: The report also states that there are problems—and we have already mentioned this in the Senedd—in terms of children's chronological age and reading age. You mentioned the teacher assessments earlier. Why do those two things not correlate? The assessments, as I understand, state that only around 17% of pupils are falling behind in terms of reading.

[96] **Ms Keane:** Nid yr un asesiadau ydynt; nid oes profion darllen yn cael eu defnyddio wrth asesu'r cwricwlwm cenedlaethol mewn darllen, gwrando, ysgrifennu a lleferydd. Nid oes galw ar hyn o bryd ar athrawon ym mlwyddyn 6, lle mae'r plant yn dod i ddiwedd yr ysgol gynradd, i osod profion darllen. Felly, mae eu hasesiadau yn seiliedig ar yr hyn y maent yn ei weld o safbwynt sut mae'r plant yn darllen y llyfrau, neu'r cyfresi darllen a lle y maent arni gyda hwy, ac ati. Rydym wedi ceisio

Ms Keane: They are not the same assessments; no reading tests are used in assessing the national curriculum in reading, listening, writing and speech. There is no demand for teachers in year 6, where children are coming to the end of primary school, to set reading tests. Therefore, their assessments are based on what they see in terms of how the children read the books or reading series and where they are at with them, and so forth. We have attempted to explain this in the text, in case people wondered how they do the

egluro hynny yn y testun, rhag ofn i bobl feddwl sut maent yn gwneud yr asesiad. Nid yr un asesiad ydyw. Pan maent yn mynd i flwyddyn 7, mae'r ysgol uwchradd yn gosod asesiadau, hynny yw profion darllen safonedig. Maent yn ffurfiol. Felly, ar gorn hynny wedyn rydym yn adnabod y gwendidau o safbwynt y 40% nad sydd yn cyrraedd yr oedran darllen cronolegol. Nid wyf yn bwriadu adrodd ar hyn flwyddyn nesaf. Bryd hynny, bwriadaf adrodd ar y profion darllen mae'r awdurdodau wedi addo eu gosod yn yr ysgolion eleni. Felly, flwyddyn nesaf byddaf yn adrodd ar rheini. Y rheswm y gwnaethom adrodd ar yr arolwg hwn oedd am fy mod yn credu bod diffyg digonedd o lythrennedd ym mlwyddyn 7 yn amharu ar gynnydd plant ar draws y cwricwlwm yng nghyfnod allweddol 3.

assessment. It is not the same assessment. When they go to year 7, the secondary school sets assessments, that is, standardised reading tests. They are formal. Therefore, on the basis of that, we recognise the weaknesses in terms of the 40% who do not reach the chronological reading age. I do not intend to report on this next year. Then, I intend to report on the reading tests that the authorities have pledged to set in schools this year. Therefore, next year I will report on those. The reason why we reported on this survey was because I believed that a lack of sufficient literacy in year 7 impairs children's progress across the curriculum in key stage 3.

[97] **Jocelyn Davies:** That is the point that I wanted to come in on. I guess that if you are functionally illiterate and you are expected to access the whole curriculum it makes it very difficult. So, is there something wrong with the mechanics of the way in which some children are being taught? They are being taught literacy in a way that they cannot get. Maybe for some it needs to be taught in a slightly different way. We mentioned earlier, for example, the multisensory approach for very young children. It seems to me—and I have not been a teacher but I have had children in school—that the way that they are taught depends on what is in vogue. A certain technique is applied and then a couple of years later something else is in vogue and something different is applied. What happens then is that almost 20% of children leaving primary school are functionally illiterate. They have had seven years of full-time education and they are functionally illiterate. If I was trying to learn something for seven years every day and I failed, I think that I would probably give up. I just wonder about the effectiveness of the techniques that are being applied where a fifth of pupils are not able to get it.

[98] **Christine Chapman:** Sorry, before you answer, Simon, do you want to put your questions now?

[99] **Simon Thomas:** Yes, I do. On the back of that, could you say a little bit more about the techniques currently used and, particularly, how parents are involved in that? It is what the child does at home as much as what he or she does in the classroom that helps the process.

[100] **Ms Keane:** Yes, practice is very important. A good school will have, as part of its reading programme, sessions where staff discuss with parents how they can reinforce the reading skills at home. They also bring people into the school to listen to and help children with their reading. So, parental involvement is all-important. Iram Siraj-Blatchford, who is a member of the ministerial advisory group, has been keeping me in touch with this longitudinal piece of research that she has undertaken on a cohort of children in London. The really interesting feature of it is that it does not matter how poor the parents are. What is important is their interest and engagement with their children's learning. That is an encouraging finding, because there is a correlation between socioeconomic deprivation and attainment in education. There is no doubt about it, all studies tell us that. From her study came that finding. To me, that just reinforces the importance of parents' involvement, not just in reading with their children or children hearing and seeing them reading on the internet, books, newspapers and so forth, but also as a part of the reading programme of the school.

They do it systematically. They follow the school's pattern and they keep a record of what the child reads in the evenings, so that the school can see what the child has practised and so forth.

[101] **Simon Thomas:** However, just to be clear, the parents need to understand what techniques the schools are using, and schools do not always explain to parents why they want them to help their child to learn in a certain way.

[102] **Ms Keane:** Absolutely. The best schools will involve parents in explaining to them the system of learning to read and what their role is. The parents then will have an input into that, which is quite a systematic formal one.

[103] **Jocelyn Davies:** The point that I was going to make is that if there is a wrong technique in a school, it is the wrong technique at home as well, if the parents are following what the school is applying.

[104] **Ms Keane:** Yes. The technique is an area fraught with difficulty, as you may have gathered. If you walk into any room with a group of people who are experts on learning to read, you will find them divided into camps with regard to the best method of teaching pupils to read. In Estyn, we certainly believe that some formal element of phonics is a necessary part of a reading programme. On whether that is analytic phonics or synthetic phonics, we do not have a particular view. Indeed, there could be elements of both. However, there should certainly be a formal element of phonics. We mention Coed Eva Primary School in Cwmbran in the report as a good example of teaching regular systematic phonics with pace, so that children do not get bored. Phonics is about decoding the letters and linking sounds to letters. It is not necessarily about understanding what the words are saying in context.

[105] Therefore, what I would say about reading is that it is generally expected that children will learn to read by the end of the foundation phase, or key stage 1 as it was. However, I would make the case that teachers in key stage 2 are just as responsible for teaching reading and enhancing the reading skills of their pupils, and I would like to see much more emphasis in schools on developing those higher order skills for the more able and talented and on picking up this 20% who are still functionally illiterate by the time that they enter secondary school.

[106] With regard to secondary schools, we also say that schools are quite good at supporting the lower ability children. They are better at that than they are at supporting some of the other groups. Some 20% of children in secondary schools are identified, and have been for some years now, as having some special educational needs—either in school action or school action plus or statemented under the current arrangements. There are interventions for those children, and secondary schools are generally reasonably good at doing that. However, of course, for a lot of the time, those children are in mixed ability classes and they are being taught by other teachers, who, as we say in the report, are not differentiating their materials and methods enough to meet the needs of a very wide range of pupils.

[107] **Christine Chapman:** We have about half an hour left and we have quite a lot of ground to cover. Julie, do you want to come in on this?

[108] **Julie Morgan:** It was on a point a bit further back actually, but I was thinking that there is not really any right or wrong technique, because children will learn to read in different ways. The key point about those who are more disengaged is the interest of the parents. However, since I was going to ask that question, you have said that you believe that one particular method has the advantage, namely phonics.

[109] **Ms Keane:** I would say that phonics are part of a reading programme. That does not

mean that phonics are the be-all and end-all. From acquiring earlier reading skills right through all of the key stages, we have produced many reports on reading and writing, and we have come to the view that a good reading programme includes phonics. That does not mean to say that they cannot read real books as well. That does not mean that they all have to sit down and read in a particular way. We have guidance on inspecting literacy. We have a list of the different systems that are used—the Oxford Reading Tree, Jolly Phonics and so on—and we are saying that some element of phonics is helpful. However, some pupils could learn to read without phonics.

[110] **Julie Morgan:** So, it is just an element of it. That is fine.

[111] **Simon Thomas:** Should there be a national reading programme for Wales then?

[112] **Ms Keane:** I have not seen the final draft of the national literacy programme yet. However, I am assuming that, in the reading strand of the national literacy framework, there will be some clear steers with regard to reading programmes.

10.15 a.m.

[113] **Mr Rowlands:** There is no doubt that you need a systematic, consistent approach to learning how to read. I think that everyone agrees that literacy is the top priority for our young people. Therefore, it is not just about learning to read using a systematic approach, but practising that reading right across the curriculum. That is why we have been emphasising the importance of literacy, as Ann says, in key stage 2 and then further on in secondary school, not just in the subjects of Welsh and English, but in all subjects. As you mentioned, we also emphasise the importance in relation to the home and in extra-curricular activities. One thing that we said about the foundation phase and the importance of outdoor education is that there are not enough opportunities to practise reading in outdoor situations. Therefore, we are trying to normalise the process of reading across the whole curriculum so that all teachers are teachers of literacy, and that is being reinforced all the time.

[114] **Julie Morgan:** The inspectors report on policies on health and wellbeing, and we received a petition from Tenovus, through the Petitions Committee, recommending that free sun cream should be provided in schools because of the risk of damage to the skin. We held an evidence session on that. One suggestion was that attention could be given to this issue as part of the health and safety policies of a school. I wonder what your views were on that.

[115] **Ms Keane:** We absolutely agree. In fact, Meilyr has been working on this as part of the mid-cycle review, as to some adjustments we could make to the guidance on inspections and self-evaluation. Do you want to say something about that?

[116] **Mr Rowlands:** Yes, it is true that we tweak the common inspection framework every year. We revise it and ensure that it is up to date. Inspectors, for example, look at healthy living as part of the current common inspection framework. It is in the framework and our website contains quite extensive supplementary guidance on how to inspect that aspect. It does not currently mention sun protection, but that is something that we can add to it. In the inspectors guidance—and this is quite important—and in the self-evaluation guidance for schools, we have a list of the legislation, guidance and circulars that they must be familiar with. I am not sure whether schools will be legally required to have a policy on sun protection. Every year, we check that the guidance for schools and inspectors is up to date and that it refers to things like this. So, we can easily include that. We do not only put it in the guidance; we also, on a termly basis, update our inspectors on what they can look out for.

[117] **Ms Keane:** We do not have to wait until 2013, because we can do that this September. I mentioned the mid-cycle review simply because we are gathering some more

general changes as part of that review. There are possibly more radical changes for the next cycle, but, in the interim, we are also picking up changes that we can make this September.

[118] **Julie Morgan:** So, do you think that this policy could be reasonably incorporated?

[119] **Ms Keane:** Yes, before the inspections start in September. We could then update the inspectors in the training that we undertake in the summer term on the changes that we have made to the guidance.

[120] **Simon Thomas:** Rwyf am ofyn ychydig o gwestiynau am awdurdodau addysg lleol. Erbyn hyn, rydych yn arolygu awdurdodau lleol ar wahân. O'r saith sydd wedi'u harolygu hyd yma, dim ond dau sydd wedi'u canfod yn dda, ac roedd angen gwaith pellach ar y pump arall. A allwch chi ymhelaethu ar natur y gwaith pellach hwnnw?

Simon Thomas: I would like to ask a few questions on local education authorities. You now inspect local authorities separately. Of the seven inspected to date, only two have been found to be good, and there was further work to be done in the other five. Can you expand upon the nature of that further work?

[121] **Ms Keane:** Gallaf roi'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf ichi am y niferoedd hynny, er gwybodaeth. Ers hynny, rydym wedi arolygu rhagor o awdurdodau lleol a bellach mae gennym bedwar awdurdod sy'n dda, pedwar sy'n ddigonol a thri sy'n anfodhaol. Mae dau adroddiad arall yn disgwyl cael eu cyhoeddi, a byddwn yn cyhoeddi'r rheini ym mis Gorffennaf.

Ms Keane: I can update you on those numbers, for your information. Since then, we have inspected more local authorities and now we have four authorities that are good, four that are satisfactory and three that are unsatisfactory. Two other reports are waiting to be published, and we will publish those in July.

[122] Felly, rydym yn dweud wrth yr awdurdodau fod angen iddynt adnabod eu hysgolion ac anghenion eu hysgolion yn well. Rydym wedi tynhau'r disgwyliadau yn y cylch hwn. Yn y cylch diwethaf, roeddem yn canolbwyntio mwy ar brosesau a sut oedd cydweithio a phartneriaethau yn digwydd. Yn y cylch arolygu hwn, rydym yn gofyn beth yw dylanwad ac effaith hyn a ble mae'r gwelliannau ym mherfformiad disgyblion. I ddechrau, rydym yn dadansoddi'r data ar berfformiad ac rydym wedyn yn mynd at yr awdurdodau gyda chwestiynau sy'n codi o'r dadansoddiad hwnnw ac o'r hunanarfarnu y mae'r awdurdodau yn ei wneud. Mae'r pwyslais yn bendant ar beth mae'r awdurdodau yn ei wneud trwy eu gwasanaethau ar gyfer anghenion dysgu ychwanegol, trwy eu gwaith ar wella gwasanaeth ysgolion a thrwy eu gwaith ar gynhwysiad, a sut mae hynny'n dylanwadu ar ysgolion i wella profiad a deilliannau disgyblion.

Therefore, we tell the authorities that they need to know their schools and their schools' needs better. We have tightened up the expectations during this cycle. During the previous cycle, we concentrated much more on processes and how collaboration and partnerships were working. During the current inspection cycle, we are asking what has been the influence and effect of this and where are the improvements in pupils' performance. To start with, we analyse the performance data and we then go to the authorities with questions that arise from that analysis and from the self-evaluation that the authorities undertake. The emphasis is firmly on what the authorities are doing through their services for additional learning needs, through their work on school improvement services and through their work on inclusion, and how that influences schools to improve pupils' performance and outcomes.

[123] Mae angen i awdurdodau wella yn y modd y maent yn cynnal a datblygu capasiti

Improvement is needed in the way in which authorities maintain and develop capacity

yn y proffesiwn a sut maent yn sicrhau bod eu timau sy'n arwain ysgolion yn gosod disgwyliadau cyson a chadarn. Maent yn ymweld â'r ysgolion yn rheolaidd ac yn ysgrifennu adroddiadau inni cyn inni fynd i'w harolygu. Mae rhai o'r adroddiadau hynny yn dda ac yn dangos bod yr awdurdodau yn adnabod eu hysgolion, ond mae rhai yn wan. Gyda llaw, un peth da rydym wedi'i weld yn ein harolygiad o sir Ddinbych yn ddiweddar yw sut mae arweiniad cryf wedi arwain at newid a gwelliannau yn yr awdurdod. Yn y cylch diwethaf, roedd yr awdurdod yng nghategori mesurau arbennig. Mae hynny'n dangos y gall awdurdod osod arweiniad a systemau cryf yn eu lle i wella perfformiad yn yr ysgolion trwy eu herio a rhoi cefnogaeth iddynt.

within the profession and how they ensure that their school leadership teams set consistent and robust expectations. They visit schools regularly and write reports to us before we inspect them. Some of those reports are good and show that the authorities know their schools, but some are poor. By the way, one good thing that we have seen in our recent inspection of Denbighshire is how strong leadership has led to changes and improvements within the authority. During the previous cycle, the authority was in the special measures category. That shows how an authority can put strong leadership and systems in place to improve performance in schools by challenging them and giving them support.

[124] **Mr Brown:** The issue in Denbighshire was that the authority had a leadership team that was all pulling in the same direction. There was total alignment between the leader, the cabinet lead, the director of education and the chief executive. That culture was permeating into the schools and, as Ann said, leadership is key in the school environment. They all saw that there was an issue there, an intervention board was put in place in 2009, and everybody pulled in the same direction. That unity was one of the outstanding features of that inspection.

[125] Ann also mentioned self-evaluation. We find that some authorities are more robust and honest in the way that they evaluate themselves. We triangulate that with the quality of the report that advisers make of the schools. Where there is a dissonance between the two, we pick that up in the local authority inspections. When we report back to the authority, we tell them that although they say that they know the schools, in fact, they do not. This is usually mirrored by the number of schools that need Estyn follow-up inspections. There is an interesting correlation between the authorities that do know their schools—they have hardly any schools that need Estyn follow-up inspections—and other authorities, where there is a different picture.

[126] **Simon Thomas:** This is a question that I want to pursue further. What sort of correlation do you see between the lack of support for improving school performance and the assessment that you have made of authorities' own processes? You would assume that there is a correlation there, but I do not want to assume things; I want you to tell me whether there is or not, and what the nature of that correlation is.

[127] **Mr Brown:** It is not an exact correlation, but the general trend is that those authorities have schools going into follow-up. We put it to them that if they knew what was happening in their schools, why did they not spot it earlier or why did their advisory service not intervene and support the school. This is not known until an Estyn inspection finds a school wanting. So, there is a broad correlation there.

[128] The other issue on leadership, which Ann mentioned, is that, in order to help the authorities to engage in this process, we have trained a lot of local authority peer inspectors. Whereas in the previous cycle, we trained people who were quite low down in the system in local authorities, we now have quite a number of chief executives and directors of education acting as our inspectors. That is a significant feature of this. The feedback that we have received from chief executives is positive—they say that it is fantastic to be able to go into an

authority and grill their colleagues and take back any lessons that they have learned to their own authority. It is raising the issues and challenges in schools up to the highest level in authorities, which is helping authorities' prioritisation of education. However, the whole system is likely to see a sea change when the regional consortia kick in. Capacity is an issue in some of the smaller authorities, Blaenau Gwent being a classic example; the authority does not have sufficient internal capacity to do what it needs to do, which means that it draws on other authorities, like Neath Port Talbot and Newport, to come in to help it. We anticipate that, if the regional consortia work as they should do from 2012, that capacity issue should start to be addressed.

[129] **Simon Thomas:** Gofynnaf gwestiwn am y consortia. Rydych newydd ddweud eich bod yn obeithiol, ond yn yr adroddiad rydych yn dweud mai ychydig o dystiolaeth sydd o brynu i mewn ar hyn o bryd. Rydych yn dweud na allant adrodd yn glir ar y prynu i mewn a dangos y cysylltiadau hynny. Felly, pa dystiolaeth sydd y bydd gweithio ar lefel consortia yn gwella safonau addysgol? Pa dystiolaeth sydd hyd yma fod pobl yn ysgwyddo'r cyfrifoldeb ar gyfer gwella safonau yn hytrach na defnyddio'r sefyllfa ddyrys bresennol i basio'r bai o un lle i'r llall?

Simon Thomas: I will ask a question on the consortia. You have just said that you are hopeful, but in the report you say that there is little evidence of buy-in at present. You say that they cannot clearly report on the buy-in and show those connections. So, what evidence is there that consortia working will improve educational standards? What evidence is there to date that people are taking on the responsibility for improving standards rather than using the current complex situation to pass the blame from one place to another?

[130] **Ms Keane:** Nid ydynt wedi cychwyn gweithio eto.

Ms Keane: They have not started working yet.

[131] **Simon Thomas:** Maent ar ffurf gysgodol ar hyn o bryd.

Simon Thomas: They are in shadow form at present.

[132] **Ms Keane:** Maent ar ffurf gysgodol ar hyn o bryd, ac mae rhai ohonynt ar hyn o bryd yn gweithio'n well nag eraill.

Ms Keane: They are in shadow form at the moment, and some of them currently work better than others.

[133] **Simon Thomas:** Rwy'n deall nad ydynt yn ffurfiol yn eu lle, ond oni bai bod cydweithio ar lefel consortia yn digwydd yn awr, nid oes cyfle iddynt fod yn barod erbyn yr hydref, nag oes?

Simon Thomas: I understand that they are not formally in place, but unless collaboration is happening at a consortia level now, there is no chance of them being ready by the autumn, is there?

[134] **Ms Keane:** Mae rhai wedi bod yn rhwydweithio yn y gorffennol—rwy'n meddwl am Gonsortia De Orllewin a Chanolbarth Cymru yn benodol. Rwy'n gwybod cryn dipyn am SWAMWAC ac mae wedi bod ar y blaen yn hyn o beth. Mae ganddo rwydwaith a oedd yn gosod heriau i'r awdurdodau—o un awdurdod i'r llall. Felly, mae pobl wedi ymweld ag awdurdodau'r naill a'r llall ac wedi hyfforddi arweinyddion system. Fodd bynnag, mae'r ffordd mae'r gwahanol gonsortia yn cael eu llywodraethu ychydig yn wahanol. Mae rhai ar hyn o bryd yn penodi arweinyddion o'r newydd, felly

Ms Keane: Some have been networking in the past—I am thinking of the South West and Mid Wales Consortium in particular. I know quite a bit about SWAMWAC and it has been leading the field in this regard. It has a network that posed challenges to authorities—from one authority to the other. So, people have visited each other's authorities and have trained system leaders. However, the way in which different consortia are governed is slightly different. Some are currently appointing new leaders, so it is likely that the pattern by the end of the year will be quite different from what is in

mae'n debygol y bydd y patrwm erbyn diwedd y flwyddyn dipyn yn wahanol i'r hyn sydd ar waith ar hyn o bryd. Mae cydweithio rhwng rhai awdurdodau yn digwydd o fewn y consortia, ond nid ar eu traws ac nid yn ffurfiol.

place at present. Collaboration is taking place between some authorities in the consortia, but not across them and not formally.

[135] Siaradodd Simon am y broblem gyda chapasiti. Wrth gwrs, yn anorfod, mae rhai awdurdodau bach yn brin o bobl ac mae'n rhaid iddynt ddygymod â'r holl ystod o swyddogaethau mae'r awdurdodau mwyaf yn dygymod â nhw, ond heb yr un nifer o staff. Mae hynny wastad yn her—fel yr her mewn ysgol fach lle mae tri athro yn gorfod rhannu'r baich rhwng dim ond tri pherson. Mae'r un peth yn wir am yr awdurdodau. Felly, rwy'n rhagweld y bydd y consortia hefyd yn fodd o osod adnoddau rhai awdurdodau gyda'i gilydd fel bod cynhaliaeth ar draws awdurdodau yn ogystal â gwell system ar gyfer nodi perfformiad ysgolion a pherfformiad annigonol mewn ysgolion unigol ar draws y consortia. Hynny yw, dylai'r strategaeth fod yn gryfach oherwydd bod mwy o bobl ynghlwm wrth y peth, a bydd mwy o ganolbwyntio ar danberfformiad.

Simon talked about the problem with capacity. Of course, inevitably, some small authorities are short of people and they have to cope with the range of functions that the larger authorities cope with, but without the same number of staff. That is always a challenge—like the challenge in a small school where three teachers have to share the burden between just three people. The same is true of the authorities. So, I foresee that the consortia will also provide a way of bringing the resources of some authorities together so that there is support across authorities as well as a better system for recognising the performance of the schools and inadequate performance in individual schools across the consortia. That is, the strategy should be more robust because there are more people involved in it, and there will be more of a focus on underperformance.

10.30 a.m.

[136] **Simon Thomas:** Ar fater cwbl wahanol, rydym wedi clywed Gweinidogion yn dweud yn ddiweddar '*it is reasonable to assume*'. Rwy'n cael yr argraff ein bod, ar hyn o bryd, ar yr un tir yma, oherwydd yr hyn rydych yn ei ddweud yn glir iawn yw bod rhai awdurdodau yn rhy fach i gynnal y rhychwant o wasanaethau mewn ysgolion y maent i fod i'w gynnal. Mae tystiolaeth o gydweithio yn y gorffennol, wrth gwrs, sy'n dangos a yw wedi gweithio ai peidio. Rydym yn mentro i faes newydd yma, gyda gwahanol brofiadau mewn gwahanol rannau o Gymru o ran sut mae hyn yn gweithio ar hyn o bryd.

Simon Thomas: On an entirely different matter, we have heard Ministers saying recently that 'it is reasonable to assume'. I get the impression that we are, at present, on the same ground here, because what you are saying very clearly is that some authorities are too small to support the range of services in schools that they are supposed to support. There is evidence of collaboration in the past, of course, which shows whether it has worked or not. We are venturing into new territory here, with different experiences in different parts of Wales regarding how this is currently working.

[137] Yn fwy penodol, pa dystiolaeth sydd—nid dim ond yng Nghymru, ond o leoedd eraill hefyd—fod gweithio ar y lefel hon, lle rydych yn ffurfio consortiwm ond bod y cyfrifoldeb statudol yn parhau i fod gyda'r awdurdod, yn sicrhau bod safonau'n gwella mewn ysgolion, yn hytrach nag yn creu sefyllfa lle mae'n mynd yn fwy dyrys o

More specifically, what evidence is there—not only in Wales, but from other places too—that working at this level, where you form a consortium but that the statutory responsibility continues to lie with the authority, ensures that standards in schools improve, rather than creates a situation where it becomes more complex in terms of who is

ran pwy sy'n gyfrifol am beth?

[138] **Ms Keane:** Nid oes amheuaeth ein bod yn creu sefyllfa lle mai nid y bobl sy'n darparu'r gwasanaeth yw'r bobl sydd â'r dyletswyddau statudol na'r cyllid.

[139] **Simon Thomas:** Mae'r pwynt hwnnw'n mynd â ni yn ôl at un a wnaed ynghylch gwaith craffu gan gynghorau, er enghraifft, a sicrhau bod y gwaith hwnnw'n digwydd.

[140] **Ms Keane:** Mae'n codi cwestiynau o ran sut siâp fydd ar strwythur y gwasanaethau yn y dyfodol a beth sy'n mynd i ddigwydd o safbwynt deddfwriaeth er mwyn cynnal strwythurau newydd. Mae'n codi cwestiynau o ran sut mae hynny'n mynd i weithio. Mae hefyd yn codi cwestiynau i ni, oherwydd bod gennym ddyletswydd i arolygu awdurdodau lleol. Hyd yn oed o fewn y consortia, bydd dyletswydd arnom i adrodd yn ôl i'r awdurdodau lleol, gan mai ganddynt hwy mae'r dyletswyddau statudol. Rydym yn symud tuag at rywbeth sy'n ffurfioli cydweithio mewn ffordd nad oedd wedi digwydd fel roedd Llywodraeth Cymru yn gobeithio yn dilyn adroddiad Beecham. Dywedodd Beecham bod rhaid cydweithio yn y dyfodol er mwyn cynnal gwasanaethau. Yn ein hadroddiad blynyddol y llynedd roeddem yn dweud nad oedd y cydweithio hwnnw rhwng awdurdodau wedi digwydd yn y modd roedd Beecham wedi gobeithio. Mae'r consortia, felly, yn fodd o ffurfioli'r cydweithio hwnnw. Nid wyf yn ymwybodol o sefyllfa debyg mewn unrhyw wlad arall, lle gallwn ddweud bod y dyletswyddau statudol mewn un lle ond bod y gwasanaethau mewn lle arall, a bod hynny'n gweithio.

[141] **Simon Thomas:** A fyddwch yn arolygu gwasanaethau'r consortia?

[142] **Ms Keane:** Byddwn. Erbyn 2013, byddwn wedi arolygu pob awdurdod lleol yng Nghymru. Byddwn wedi cwblhau ein dyletswydd arolygu am chwe blynedd. Am y tair blynedd sy'n dilyn, byddwn yn arolygu'r consortia.

[143] **Christine Chapman:** I am conscious that we have 10 minutes left and that a lot of Members want to come in on a range of issues. We need to look at the issues of disadvantage and Welsh as a second language.

responsible for what?

Ms Keane: There is no doubt that we are creating a situation whereby the people who provide the service are not the people who have the statutory duties or the budget.

Simon Thomas: That point takes us back to one made earlier regarding scrutiny by councils, for example, and ensuring that that work is done.

Ms Keane: It raises questions regarding the form that the structure of services will take in future and what is going to happen from the point of view of legislation to support new structures. It raises questions in terms of how that is going to work. It also raises questions for us, because we have a duty to inspect local authorities. Even within the consortia, we will have a duty to report back to local authorities, because the statutory duty lies with them. We are moving towards something that formalises collaboration in a way that did not happen in the way that the Welsh Government had hoped that it would following the Beecham report. Beecham said that there must be collaboration in future to support services. In last year's annual report, we reported that that collaboration between authorities had not happened in the way that Beecham had hoped that it would. The consortia are, therefore, a means of formalising that collaboration. I am not aware of a similar situation in any other country, where we can say that the statutory duties lie in one place and the services in another, and that that arrangement works.

Simon Thomas: Will you be inspecting the consortia's services?

Ms Keane: We will. By 2013, we will have inspected every local authority in Wales. We will have fulfilled our duty to inspect for six years. For the three years that follow, we will be inspecting the consortia.

[144] **Jenny Rathbone:** My question is on closing the gap in attainment and the role of the foundation phase. We know from evidence of the Effective Provision of Pre-School Education project that disadvantage is already there at the age of two, but that properly integrated nursery education led by a teacher can beat that disadvantage. Is there enough emphasis in what we and local authorities are doing on really ensuring that everybody is able to access the foundation phase from the age of three? I know that that is not the case in my constituency.

[145] **Ms Keane:** What is not the case?

[146] **Jenny Rathbone:** Some children do not have a place, because there has not been adequate planning. I do not feel that there is enough in your report about quality, integrated education, and I would like to know what emphasis you are planning to place on this in the future.

[147] **Ms Keane:** I have to admit that I am not aware of how big an issue it is that three-year-olds are not getting placements in non-maintained settings. I am not aware of that issue. I can certainly look into it and do some work on it. Perhaps you would like to let me know what information you have on this, so that I can follow it up.

[148] **Jenny Rathbone:** Okay, but the principle of the issue is this: if the gap widens as children grow up, why do we not focus more on closing that gap when they are very young?

[149] **Ms Keane:** I think that Flying Start and the foundation phase do a lot to focus on that. There are two issues for me here. One issue is the engagement of disadvantaged children with the values, ethos and ambitions of education. The second issue comes back to literacy. If you are not learning to read and you start to fall behind, you start to see yourself as a failure. That tends to be the switch that is thrown, which leads to disengagement. I believe that we are doing a great deal through Flying Start—though we do not inspect that, by the way, so I cannot speak about it on the basis of direct evidence from Estyn. However, from what I have read about it, I think that it is doing a lot to close the gap. I also think that the foundation phase is suited to children of all aptitudes and abilities. It is engaging children in a very active way and is giving them more confidence, independence and resilience, in that they are willing to have a go at things as it is not a ‘pass or fail’ situation. The foundation phase is building their confidence, and that can only be a good thing. In that sense, we believe that it is a successful initiative.

[150] **Mr Rowlands:** I think that you have identified an important issue. We inspect schools and we also inspect non-maintained settings. It is true that there are different policies in different parts of the country. The balance is different. Very broadly speaking, we find that schools tend to have better provision than non-maintained settings in teaching literacy and numeracy, particularly on the more technical side of things. However, there is the other side, which is the availability of those settings, which are often much more convenient to parents. That balance might well be different in different areas. So, this is a very complex policy area.

[151] **Aled Roberts:** Hoffwn ofyn cwestiynau am ddysgu Cymraeg fel ail iaith. Pam mae cyn lleied o blant yn dewis dilyn y cwrs TGAU llawn? A oes gennych dystiolaeth o ba mor effeithiol yw'r cwrs byr TGAU? Mae llawer o drafod yn y gogledd-ddwyrain ynghylch y niferoedd sy'n dilyn y cwrs byr, a'r ffaith bod plant yn gorffen y cwrs heb unrhyw sgiliau bron o ran siarad

Aled Roberts: I would like to ask some questions about Welsh as a second language. Why are so few children choosing to pursue the full GCSE course? Do you have any evidence on the effectiveness of the short GCSE course? There is a lot of discussion in north-east Wales about the numbers pursuing the short course, and the fact that children complete the course with very few skills in

Cymraeg.

[152] **Ms Keane:** Rydym wedi ysgrifennu adroddiadau ar y mater hwn yn y gorffennol. Nid yw'r cwrs TGAU byr—ac efallai fod hwn yn gwestiwn y dylid ei ofyn am y cwrs TGAU llawn mewn Cymraeg fel ail iaith—yn arwain at blant sy'n gwbl ddwyieithog; nid oes unrhyw amheuaeth am hynny. Yr unig ffordd o sicrhau eich bod yn gwbl ddwyieithog yw mynychu ysgol cyfrwng Cymraeg—mae'n bur debyg y byddech yn gwbl ddwyieithog erbyn eich bod yn 11 oed, neu erbyn eich bod yn gadael yr ysgol uwchradd, yn yr achos hwnnw. Wrth gwrs, mae pwyslais mawr ar ddysgu Saesneg yn yr ysgolion hynny, yn ogystal â Chymraeg. Serch hynny, mae'r tueddiadau perthnasol ar i lawr. O'r plant sy'n dilyn cyrsiau sy'n arwain at gymhwyster mewn Cymraeg fel ail iaith yng nghyfnod allweddol 4, mae hanner y rhai sy'n cymryd TGAU yn gwneud cwrs llawn a thua hanner yn gwneud cwrs byr. Mae'r duedd i wneud cwrs llawn ar i lawr.

[153] Mae dau beth y gallaf ddweud. Yn gyntaf, mae capasiti yn un elfen o hyn, hynny yw, cael staff sy'n gymwys a pharod i addysgu Cymraeg ail iaith. Talcen caled, ambell waith, yw addysgu Cymraeg ail iaith mewn ysgol cyfrwng Saesneg. Nid oes amheuaeth am hynny. Mae rhai ysgolion yn llwyddo yn well na'i gilydd a rhai yn llwyddo yn arbennig o dda. Fodd bynnag, yn y gorffennol, rydym wedi dod ar draws sefyllfaoedd lle mae rhai athrawon yn addysgu gwersi Cymraeg ail iaith heb fod yn arbenigwyr iaith. Felly, mae capasiti yn broblem.

[154] Buaswn hefyd yn argymhell bod arweinwyr ym mhob ysgol yng Nghymru yn edrych ar ffyrdd o gyfoethogi profiadau cyfrwng Cymraeg mewn ysgolion cyfrwng Saesneg. Mae hyn wedi cychwyn digwydd yn y cylch diwethaf, ers inni gychwyn arolygu'r dimensiynau Cymreig a Chymraeg mewn ysgolion cyfrwng Saesneg. Felly, mae rhywfaint o hynny yn digwydd. Fodd bynnag, nid yw'n ddigon i gael arwyddion dwyieithog na chael gwaith dwyieithog mewn arddangosfeydd. Yr hyn sy'n bwysig yw bod gweithgareddau, efallai gweithgareddau'r Urdd neu weithgareddau allgyrsiol yn ogystal, efallai, â chysiau neu

spoken Welsh.

Ms Keane: We have written reports on this in the past. The short GCSE course—and this may be a question that should be asked about the full GCSE course in Welsh as a second language—does not produce children who are completely bilingual; there is no doubt about that. The only way to ensure that you are fully bilingual is to attend a Welsh-medium school—it is very likely that you would be completely bilingual by the time you were 11 years old, or when you left secondary school, in that case. Of course, there is a great emphasis on teaching English at those schools, as well as Welsh. However, the relevant trends are down. Of the children who pursue courses that lead to a qualification in Welsh as a second language at key stage 4, half of those who are taking a GCSE are on the full course and about half are on the short course. There is a downward trend with the full course.

There are two things that I can say. First, capacity is one element of this, that is to say, getting staff who are competent and willing to teach Welsh as a second language. It is sometimes a hard task to teach Welsh as a second language in an English-medium school. There is no doubt about that. Some schools are more successful than others, and some are very successful indeed. However, in the past, we have come across situations in which certain teachers are teaching Welsh second-language classes without being experts in the language. So, capacity is a problem.

I would also recommend that leaders in all schools in Wales look at ways and means of enhancing Welsh-medium experiences in English-medium schools. This has started happening in the last cycle, since we started inspecting the Welsh and Welsh-language dimensions within English-medium schools. So, that is taking place to a degree. However, it is not enough to have bilingual signage or for work to be displayed bilingually in exhibitions. What is important is that activities, perhaps Urdd activities or extra-curricular activities as well, perhaps, as courses or lessons in subjects other than Welsh should be available through the

wersi mewn pynciau ar wahân i'r Gymraeg yn cael eu cynnig drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Lle mae hynny'n digwydd ac mae arweinyddiaeth yr ysgol yn pwysleisio pwysigrwydd defnyddio'r Gymraeg yn y gwasanaeth boreol, mewn cyngherddau neu ar unrhyw achlysur cyffredinol mewn ysgol, mae statws yr iaith yn codi ac mae'r plant yn gweld eu bod yn rhan o gymdeithas ddwyieithog, er eu bod mewn ysgol lle mae'r rhan fwyaf o'r gwersi drwy gyfrwng y Saesneg.

medium of Welsh. Where that happens and the school leadership places an emphasis on the importance of the use of the Welsh language in the morning assembly, in concerts or at any general event held in the school, the status of the language is enhanced and the children see that they are part of a bilingual society, although they are at a school where most of the lessons are taught through the medium of English.

[155] **Christine Chapman:** There is one final question. Julie, you wanted to ask a question about Gypsy/Travellers.

[156] **Julie Morgan:** Quickly, because I know that you do not have the time to answer this properly, there is an issue about Gypsy/Traveller children, particularly at secondary school level in terms of attendance and making progress. Are you able to see any progress being made in addressing that issue by local authorities?

[157] **Ms Keane:** Some local authorities put a lot of resource, effort and commitment into liaising with Gypsy and Traveller communities to make that link so that they can affect the attitudes of people in those communities in order to help them to value the education of boys and girls up to the age of 16. We have said in a report that we published last year that some local authorities have put a lot of resource and effort into this. It has not had a huge impact on things like attendance rates and outcomes for those pupils. There are two issues: one is to do with the attitudes of the Gypsy and Traveller communities, which perhaps do not see the value that education in a formal school setting can provide—that is why local authorities sometimes set up hubs that are close to the communities or in the communities to help with education—the other is the schools, which, maybe, could do more to acknowledge the cultures and the values of those communities in a way that removes the stigma associated with the attendance of Gypsy and Traveller pupils, who are sometimes the object of bullying and prejudice.

[158] **Julie Morgan:** I met recently with a group of young Gypsy and Traveller children, and we talked about the main issues that they had to deal with. Their response was 'racism'. That was the word that they used, saying that it happened at school. We asked 'From who?', and they said 'From everyone'. They obviously had strong feelings. I do not know what more can be done to address this issue.

[159] **Ms Keane:** On what was just said, it is a vicious circle, where the one reinforces the other. Where there is a community of Gypsy and Traveller children, the best schools—and there are good schools; there are some in Swansea, for instance, that we looked at as part of that survey—do a lot to talk about the culture of the Gypsy and Traveller communities and do so in a positive way in order to affect the attitudes of children who might take a racist attitude and behave in a bullying fashion towards Gypsy and Traveller children, which does happen.

10.45 a.m.

[160] **Christine Chapman:** I know that there were other questions, but because of time—and I appreciate your time here today—perhaps we can write to you with those, if you are happy, Ann, and you could respond in writing. Again, I thank you very much; it has been a really interesting and useful session for us today. Thank you, on behalf of the committee, for attending. You will be sent a transcript of the meeting in due course so that you can check it

for accuracy. Thank you very much for coming in this morning.

**Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog Rhif 17.42(vi) i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd
o'r Cyfarfod**
**Motion under Standing Order No. 17.42(vi) to Resolve to Exclude the Public
from the Meeting**

[161] **Christine Chapman:** I move that

the committee resolves to exclude the public from the remainder of this meeting and the meeting on 25 April in accordance with Standing Order No. 17.42(vi).

[162] I see that the committee is in agreement.

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.
Motion agreed.*

*Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 10.46 a.m.
The public part of the meeting ended at 10.46 a.m.*