

Children and Young People Committee

Meeting Venue:
Committee Room 2 – Senedd

Meeting date:
1 December 2011

Meeting time:
09:15

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



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Agenda

1. Introductions, apologies and substitutions (09:15)

2. Update on European Issues (09:16 – 09:45) (Pages 1 – 11)
Gregg Jones – Research Service (via video conference)

Break (09:45 – 10:00)

3. Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009: Evidence Session (10:00 – 11:00) (Pages 12 – 24)

National Training Federation Wales

Arwyn Watkins – Chair, National Training Federation Wales

Rachel Searle – National Training Federation Wales

The Federation of Small Businesses

Iestyn Davies – Federation of Small Businesses

4. Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009: Evidence Session (11:00 – 11:45) (Pages 25 – 37)

Careers Wales

Joyce M'Caw – Chief Executive, Careers Wales North East Wales

Steve Hole – Senior Manager, Careers Wales, Mid Glamorgan & Powys

5. Motion under Standing order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the

public from the meeting for the following business (11:45)

6. Discussion of forward work programme (11:46 – 12:15)

7. Papers to note (Pages 38 – 65)

Correspondence from the Association of School and College Leaders regarding the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009, at the Committee meeting on 17 November

Further information from John Fabes, 14–19 Network Co-ordinator Cardiff, regarding the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009, at the Committee meeting on 9 November

Letter from the Minister for Health and Social Services (31.10.11) regarding child health issues

Letter from the Minister for Health and Social Services (31.10.11) regarding the role of school nurses

Letter from the Minister for Education and Skills (02.11.11) regarding local authority spending on nursery education

Letter from the Minister for Health and Social Services and the Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services (03.11.11) on expenditure on provision of wheelchairs for children and children and family services

Letter from the Minister for Health and Social Services (03.11.11) with a progress report on guidance for professionals to assess children's health care needs

Letter from the Minister for Education and Skills (15.11.11) regarding the education and skills MEG draft budget

Children and Young People Committee

EU policy issues relevant to Children and Young People

Briefing:

Date of session:

01 December 2011

This briefing has been produced by the Research Service for members of the Children and Young People Committee.

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**Research
Service**

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1. Introduction

Under the new committee structures for the Fourth Assembly agreed by Business Committee in June 2011, Europe and EU related matters are to be mainstreamed across all relevant committees rather than having a dedicated European and External Affairs Committees.

This means that Children and Young People Committee has responsibility for dealing with those European issues that fall within its portfolio.

There are two main ways in which this is likely to occur:

- dedicated sessions focused on priorities/issues on the EU policy agenda in Brussels
- scope to look towards Europe (and the international dimension) in terms of comparing practices in Wales, identifying witnesses and experts to bring an external dimension to the other areas of work undertaken by the Committee

This paper is addressed at the first bullet point, and provides the Committee (in section 3) with information on relevant policy developments that are ongoing or planned for 2012. In terms of the European Commission's Work Programme for 2012 (which was published on 15 November) there is only one specific action on children and young people in this (the Child Poverty Recommendation).

Before going into the detail on these actions, some background information is provided in section 2 on the EU policy-making process, to explain:

- the competences at EU level in the area of children and young people and types of actions coming out of the EU as a result of exercising these competences
- the relevant organisations and structures operating in Brussels (including the formal EU Institutions and some EU networks) with responsibilities for issues affecting children and young people

Actions for the Committee:

Section 4 sets out a number of potential areas of action for the Committee to consider and agree in terms of follow up work on EU-related matters.

2. EU policy-making process

2.1. *Limited EU competences*

Children and young people is a broad category that links into a wide range of issues covered by the EU, including social, sport, education, health, culture, languages, employment, training and many more.

Education, youth, culture and sport remain areas of exclusive national competence, and the role of the EU is limited to carrying out actions to support, coordinate or supplement Member States' actions in these areas. This can include publishing strategies and reports, supporting benchmarking and exchange of best practice, and providing financial support

to encourage actions (through a range of EU funding programmes – covered in section 3.6 below).

In the area of **employment and social policy** there is some degree of “shared competence”, with the EU given a role of “co-ordinating” Member States policies or potentially implementing common policies that supplement actions being taken at national level, and also having responsibility for legislation affecting workers’ rights (including health and safety, working time, equalities and equal opportunities etc.). However, social inclusion policies (which would include tackling poverty and child poverty) are national competences, and as with education policy (described above) the EU’s role is limited to supporting actions, which can include adoption of communications (setting out suggested policy approaches) and “soft law” such as adoption of recommendations.

The Europe 2020 strategy, the EU’s headline economic strategy for growth (adopted in June 2010 – see section 3.1 below) is an example of this “co-ordinating” role, and it incorporates targets agreed at EU level for education, employment and social inclusion, although the actions to deliver these are primarily the responsibility of Member States (supported by EU level actions, e.g. through EU funding programmes). This is described in more detail in section 3.1.

The other area of particular relevance is the **rights of the child**¹. The rights of the child are enshrined in the EU Treaty (Article 3.3) and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights (Article 24), and all EU Member States are also signed up to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This translates into a requirement that all policies and actions with an impact on children must be designed, implemented and monitored in line with the best interests of the child. Wales became the first country in the UK to embed the UNCRC into domestic legislation when on 16 March 2011, Royal Approval was given to the *Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011*. It imposes a duty upon Welsh Ministers and the First Minister to have due regard to the rights and obligations in the UNCRC and its Optional Protocols, when making decisions of a strategic nature about how to exercise functions which are exercisable by them.

Finally, action is undertaken in a number of other areas including protection of minors using ICT/internet, health and consumer affairs policy (e.g. toy product safety).

2.2. *European Commission*

There is no dedicated department or Commissioner within the European Commission responsible for children and young people. The bulk of actions related to children and young people would fall under the responsibility of three Directorates-General (DG) in the European Commission:

- DG Employment and Social Affairs (youth unemployment, poverty and social inclusion)
- DG Education and Culture (also responsible for youth policy and sport)
- DG Justice and Home Affairs (rights of the child)

¹ See [DG Justice Rights of the Child web-pages](#)

2.3. *Council of Ministers*

The **Council of the Ministers** is the EU Institution bringing together the representatives (politicians and officials) of the national governments (i.e. the EU Member States). It organises its work into thematic/policy structures. There are three Council formations that will have most interest in children and young people related issues:

- Education, youth, culture and sport
- Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs
- Justice and Home Affairs

Wales is represented in the Council of Ministers by the UK Government, however, an arrangement has been agreed with the devolved administrations that devolved ministers can attend meetings of Council (acting as representative of the UK) on issues where they are of particular interest to the devolved administration (e.g. Education and Culture Council meetings have been attended by Welsh Ministers).

The UK Government has also agreed a **Memorandum of Understanding** with the devolved administrations – the latest version was signed in June 2011² – which includes within its scope the approach to European affairs. In terms of policy content/issues the UK Government and ministers from the devolved administrations meet through the format of the Joint Ministerial Committee (Europe). The devolved administrations are also consulted in the preparation of explanatory memoranda by the UK Government on EU proposals and policy documents, in all areas of devolved competence and where there is a devolved interest in the respective dossiers.

2.4. *European Parliament*

Wales is represented in the European Parliament by its four Welsh MEPs: John Bufton (UK Independence Party); Jill Evans (Plaid Cymru); Dr Kay Swinburne (Conservatives); and Derek Vaughan (Labour).

Within the European Parliament there is no dedicated committee dealing with children and young people. The three most relevant committees are:

- **Culture and Education Committee**, Chaired by German MEP Doris Pack (there are no Welsh MEPs on this Committee), has within its remit education and youth policy
- **Employment Committee**, Chaired by French MEP Pervenche Beres (there are no Welsh MEPs on this Committee), has responsibility for all employment policy and all aspects of social policy such as working conditions, social security and social protection.
- **Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee**, Chaired by Swedish MEP Mikael Gustafsson (Welsh MEP Jill Evans is a substitute on this Committee), includes addressing violence against women and children within its remit, and equal opportunities and equal treatment in the workplace

² See [UK Cabinet Office web-site](#)
Enquiry no: 11/2736/Gregg Jones/Siân
Thomas

2.5. *Committee of the Regions*

Wales also has representatives on the two consultative bodies (that are located in Brussels), the **Committee of the Regions** (including Christine Chapman AM and Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM) and the **Economic and Social Affairs Committee**. These two bodies are consulted on all EU policy developments, although they do not have power to force changes in draft EU legislation.

2.6. *EU networks*

Within these policy areas there are a number of EU networks actively engaged in promoting the interests of children and young people, and focusing on addressing poverty and other issues.

These include:

- **Eurochild**: a network of organisations and individuals working in and across Europe to improve the quality of life of children and young people. Eurochild has 109 Full Members and 36 Associate Members in 35 European countries, including Children in Wales. It is based in Brussels. The Eurochild annual conference is being held in Cardiff from 30 November to 2 December 2011.
- **European Anti-Poverty Network**: a network of independent network of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and groups involved in the fight against poverty and social exclusion in the Member States of the European Union, established in 1990. It is made up of 26 national networks of voluntary organisations and grassroots groups and 23 European organisations. It has a Brussels office.
- **Save the Children**: has an office in Brussels which is dedicated to lobbying on EU-related issues.

3. **Ongoing and planned developments at EU level**

3.1. *Europe 2020 strategy*

Europe 2020, the EU's job and growth strategy which is focused on delivering "smart, sustainable and inclusive growth" and which was adopted in 2010, provides the overarching framework through which all other EU policy developments (as relevant) are being aligned.

The Europe 2020 strategy sets out five headline targets for the EU to be delivered over the coming decade (including employment, climate change and R&D targets), of which there are two main (relevant) targets within Europe 2020 for the Children and Young People's Committee:

- **Share of early school leavers should be under 10%** and at least 40% of 30–34 years old should have completed a tertiary or equivalent education. In the UK Government NRP for 2011 Wales had a rate of 12% of 16–18 year olds that are not in education,

employment or training (NEETs), which is above the EU target. Latest Welsh Government figures show that this has fallen to 11 per cent in 2010.³

- **Reduction of poverty** by aiming to lift at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty or exclusion. [Note: there is no specific target for addressing child poverty in the Europe 2020 strategy].

A third target, that at least **75 % of the population aged 20–64 should be employed**, although falling outside the age range of this committee, has relevance as the issue of addressing “youth” unemployment – and combatting fears of a “lost generation” – is one of the top priorities within employment and social affairs policy. In some EU countries the youth unemployment rate is now over 40%, whilst the EU average is 21% and UK figure is 20.4% (latest data is for 2nd quarter of 2011)⁴. The latest figures available for Wales show a rate of 24% (but these are for 2010, where the UK average was 19.6% and EU average was 20.9%).

The Europe 2020 Strategy is implemented through a combination of EU level action and actions undertaken at Member State level (national, regional and local).

EU level action includes publication of a series of themed “flagship initiatives” to provide a framework for actions by Member States on the ground, and support through the various EU funding programmes. For children and young people the following are most relevant:

- **European Platform Against Poverty and Social Exclusion** “flagship initiative”, which includes proposed action addressing child poverty, early school learning and care, and early school leaving (see following sections for more on these). Christine Chapman in her role as Committee of the Regions (CoR) representative prepared a report on this flagship initiative, which was adopted at CoR plenary in March 2011.
- **Youth on the Move** “flagship initiative”, which includes measures aimed at encouraging youth mobility, reducing early school leaving, tackling youth unemployment, and promoting greater participation in higher education
- **Support through EU funding programmes**: including the current programmes for 2007–2013 (in particular the Lifelong Learning Programme, Youth in Action and the EU Structural Funds) and in future programmes 2014–2020 (Erasmus for All and EU Structural Funds) (see section 3.6 for further details)

At the national level (UK level) there is a requirement on Member States to prepare each year a **National Reform Programmes** setting out the actions planned and underway to deliver the Europe 2020 targets. In the UK this is prepared by the UK Government in consultation with the devolved administrations (including the Welsh Government), and it should include priority actions addressing the poverty and education targets.

³ Welsh Government

[Participation of young people in education and the labour market \(year end 2009 and 2010\(provisional\)\)](#) SDR 125/2011, 27 July 2011

⁴ Figures for Quarter 2 of 2011 taken from [Eurostat](#)

3.2. *Tackling early school leaving*

The Commission published a strategy on tackling early school leaving in January 2011, and the EU Education Ministers in the Council of Ministers adopted a **Recommendation⁵ on Early School Leaving** in June 2011, which includes an action for all Member States to have comprehensive strategies to address this issue by the end of 2012⁶.

3.3. *Recommendation on child poverty*

The European Commission Work Programme for 2012 identifies this as a priority and envisages the Council of Ministers adopting this by June 2012. It will outline common principles for effective monitoring tools to combat and prevent poverty in early age.

3.4. *Early childhood education and care*

The European Commission published a communication in February 2011 setting out the key issues for future European co-operation in early childhood education and care with the aim of improving access to and the quality of services from birth to the start of compulsory schooling. EU Education Ministers adopted Council Conclusions on early childhood education and care in May 2011. The compulsory school starting age in European countries ranges from age four in Northern Ireland to age seven in Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Latvia, Lithuania and Sweden.⁷ In Wales, England and Scotland the compulsory school starting age is five although there is provision for younger children through and entitlement to part-time nursery provision at age three and also ongoing developments in all the three countries in the provision of early years education and childcare for 0–3 year olds.

3.5. *Rights of the Child*

In February 2011 the Commission published a strategy on the rights of the child: **An EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child⁸**. This sets out a number of “concrete” actions towards children, grouped into a number of main categories:

- Child-friendly justice
- Targeting EU action to protect children when they are vulnerable (including promotion and full implementation of the missing child hotline 116000 and other child alert mechanisms)
- Children in the EU's external action (including actions to address and combat child labour, children in wars, child sex tourism)
- Raising child awareness and participation

The Commission established a [European Forum on the Rights of the Child](#) in 2006, which is an annual conference bringing together a range of key stakeholders in this area

⁵ Recommendations are “soft” EU law. They are non-binding, therefore, carry no legal weight. However, they are viewed as having political significance.

⁶ For more information see [DG Education and Culture web-site](#)

⁷ National Foundation for Educational Research, [Compulsory age of starting school in European countries, 2010](#)

⁸ [COM\(2011\)60](#)

including Member State governments, ombudspersons for children, Committee of the Regions, Council of Europe and NGOs to exchange views and best practice in this field. The 6th Forum was held on 23 November in Brussels, and focused on the two themes: (i) developing evidence-based child friendly policies; and (ii) communicating children's rights.

3.6. *Children and health*

Health is a national rather than EU competence. However, as with education and social policy the EU has a supporting role in this area, and this can cross over into health matters affecting children and young people.

An example of this will be the adoption of Council Conclusions at the meeting of EU Health Ministers on scheduled for 2 December on two health problems affecting children:

- **chronic respiratory diseases in children:** EU Ministers will call for continued and strengthened action for the prevention, early diagnosis and treatment of these diseases, in particular through promotion of best practices, support for research, smoking prevention, improvement of air quality and stronger cooperation.
- **communication disorders (hearing, vision and speech impairments) in children:** EU Ministers will stress the need for early detection and treatment of these disorders and pointing to the importance of raising public awareness, exchanging information, knowledge and experiences, and using e-Health tools and innovative technologies in order to improve healthcare in this field.

3.7. *EU funding programmes*

As already noted one way in which the Commission seeks to encourage and support action is through funding programmes which provide financial support to a range of projects and initiatives targeted at children and young people.

Depending on the types of actions being supported organisations from Wales, including public bodies, schools, voluntary organisations and private sector bodies can apply under these EU funding programmes to run project/initiatives or benefit directly as participants in projects run by other bodies.

There are a range of EU funding programmes currently in place which will run until the end of 2013, and these will then be replaced a new series of programmes for the period 2014–2020.

The current programmes most relevant to children and young people are:

- **Lifelong Learning Programme (2007–2013):** in particular the Comenius (school exchange) programme, which supports mobility of teachers and students and curriculum development
- **Youth in Action Programme (2007–2013):** dedicated programme to supporting youth mobility and exchanges, as well as supporting EU level NGOs active in this area.
- **EU Structural Funds programmes:** regional development programmes managed within Wales focused on economic regeneration and economic competitiveness. There is limited scope to fund activities aimed directly at children, however, a number of the

potential measures (e.g. support for childcare) are aimed at supporting broader policy goals aimed at achieving work–family life balance, and targeting more vulnerable and socially excluded groups.

The European and External Affairs Committee (during the Third Assembly) undertook an inquiry into Welsh participation in EU Research and Education Programmes, which included information on engagement in the Lifelong Learning Programme and the Youth in Action Programme⁹.

The Commission is in the process of preparing the successor programmes for 2014–2020, and these will be closely aligned to delivering the headline Europe 2020 objectives/targets. There will be some changes compared to the current programmes:

- **Erasmus for All (2014–2020):** proposals published on 23 November 2011. This will replace the Lifelong Learning Programme, and will integrate the current Youth Programme and include the possibility of actions in the field of sport (which are not currently part of a core EU–programme). These proposals will go through “ordinary legislative procedure” which requires agreement between the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers (i.e. Member State governments) before the proposals become EU law. This process could take anything from 12–24 months (or potentially longer).
- **EU Structural Funds (2014–2020):** proposals published on 6 October 2011, and these are subject to an ongoing inquiry (likely to last duration of EU negotiations) by the Enterprise and Business Committee. These proposals include specific actions aimed at addressing the Europe 2020 objectives relevant to children and young people:
 - a requirement for at least 20% of European Social Fund (ESF) allocations to support reducing poverty and social exclusion
 - scope to support actions that reduce early school–leaving and promote equal access to good quality early –childhood education¹⁰
 - scope to invest in education, skills and lifelong learning by developing education and training infrastructure¹¹

⁹ See [European and External Affairs Committee web–pages](#)

¹⁰ Article 3.1(b)(i) of the European Social Fund (ESF) draft regulation COM(2011)607

¹¹ Article 5(10) of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) draft regulation COM(2011)614

4. Potential follow up actions for Committee to consider

Potential Action 1:

Committee to consider holding a dedicated session on some of the issues highlighted above (in particular early childhood education and care, child poverty, early school leaving, rights of the child) with the Eurochild, the European Anti-Poverty Network, Save the Children, relevant European Commission officials and Welsh MEPs to explore how these developments potentially impact in Wales.

Potential Action 2:

Committee to hold a session with relevant Welsh Ministers looking at how they are responding to Recommendations adopted at EU level in the areas outlined, and to explain how they contribute to the preparation of the UK National Reform Programme in terms of addressing the priorities and needs of children and young people.

Potential Action 3:

Committee to consider holding an inquiry looking at the opportunities under future EU Programmes to support actions focused on children and young people, providing a forum for Welsh stakeholders to participate in the EU-level discussions.

Agenda Item 3

Inquiry into the Implementation of the Learning & Skills (Wales) Measure 2009

Evidence from the National Training Federation Wales



Developing the Network to Deliver Excellence in Vocational Skills
Datblygu'r Rhwydwaith i Gyflawni Rhagoriaeth mewn Sgiliau Galwedigaethol

Evidence to the Children and Young People Committee Inquiry into the Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 from National Training Federation for Wales (NTfW)

Introduction:

1. NTfW is a pan Wales membership organisation. We have 109 membership organisations which include independent training providers, further education colleges, local authority training departments and third sector organisations. Our members include 26 of the 27 Welsh Government quality assured work based learning organisations who provide mainstream funded Traineeship, Steps to Employment and Apprenticeship training throughout Wales. We also have associate members ranging from Awarding Bodies to the Open University.
2. Throughout the response, sections written in italics are comments received directly from members in response to our consultation exercise used to inform NTfW's response to the inquiry.

The effect that the implementation of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009* has had on young people aged 14-19 years;

3. On a simple level, young people now have a wider choice of vocational and academic courses than they had before the measure. Some of the courses introduced as a result of the 14-19 measure are now linking the world of work more closely to education. Some young people are also experiencing other learning environments due to increased collaboration between schools, colleges and in limited cases, work based training providers following the measure however, the situation is complex.
4. A greater range of vocational courses has been offered but the appropriateness of some, their relevance to the occupational sector they are linked to and the value employers or further education or apprenticeship providers place on some of these qualifications is questionable. Planning of vocational course provision and the learning offer often occurs at curriculum team level within a local network or sometimes within a local school. Consultation with sector skills councils who represent employers or with higher level learning providers (FE, HE, Work Based Learning [WBL] /Apprenticeship providers) is limited at best. This can result in courses offered that can be delivered within the school environment, maximising the use of existing staff and resources and meet the required number of vocational course offers at the necessary level. However, whilst meeting the measure that course may well not be valued or recognised outside of the school learning environment or within the world of work. This can cause an issue with work based/ vocational progression when the learner leaves school, with the pupil assuming the qualification provides a far stronger passport to the next level/stage than it actually does. Sector skills councils, awarding bodies and the Welsh Government have worked together to develop Principal Learning Qualifications which are vocational courses linked to the Welsh Baccalaureate which can provide a progression pathway into further learning, an apprenticeship or employment in certain occupational sectors. These courses require formal collaboration

between schools and other learning providers (FE or WBL) and employers as they require elements to be delivered which are related to the workplace and as such no-one provider can meet all course delivery requirements. Despite Welsh Government pump prime funding being available for the implementation of these courses into schools, the take up of these has been limited and patchy across regions for various reasons including complexity, cost and adopting a radically new approach to course provision.

5. Across Wales NTfW members are running small 14-19 programmes, all with great success and glowing reports from the networks but provision is patchy and piecemeal. Many of these courses are run as loss leaders so providers can showcase their provision to schools and to show schools the positive outcomes from our programmes. Some examples are:

Several NTfW members collaborated with Cardiff Business School and schools in Cardiff to offer twilight Leadership and Management programme, for post 16 pupils and more able and talented pre 16 pupils. This has included work experiences with respected large employers and learners gaining Institute of Leadership and Management qualifications. The pilot of this course was possible because providers offered their services at no cost and negotiated savings with awarding bodies etc. This pilot was highly successful with excellent completion rates and feedback from the pupils, schools, education and training providers and employers involved. As a result, this programme is now being funded from the ANDP.

A generic employability programme across one local authority. This short course is in its second year and to date over 400 disengaged learners have completed the programme with over 90% achieving the full suite of nationally recognised qualifications. Subjects include: BTEC L1 Award in Workskills, Fire Safety, Food Hygiene, Manual Handling, Health & Safety, First Aid, Alcohol Awareness, Entrepreneurship, Managing your money.

Most of the 14-19 course collaborations with work based learning and training providers are for pupils who are disengaged or at risk of this, or demonstrating behavioural problems. There are limited exceptions such as a 2 year Business and Administration programme for key stage 4 (14 year olds) with alternate classroom and work place elements. Although early days, this programme is showing fantastic results and the school staff, pupils, employers and training provider are seeing the benefit of learners going out into the workplace to reinforce their classroom learning and develop their wider people and employment skills.

6. However, various factors have meant it has been notoriously difficult to open these doors despite the need, the opportunity for progression into employment or further training and the quality of the programme.

Historically, 14-19 networks were a closed shop to training and apprenticeship providers and NTfW have an important role to play here including undertaking special projects to develop relationships and transformation between 14-19 networks and the work based learning network and NTfW members. NTfW has experienced some successes in helping break down these barriers although there are local and regional variations. We read about calls from the Welsh Government to reduce the number of courses with no credible outcome or delivery of courses by teachers without specialist training in that vocational area, but in reality will this happen?

Whether the implementation of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009* has had any effect on the numbers of young people choosing to stay on in education or training after the end of compulsory education at age 16;

7. Some NTfW members have been involved in courses which have resulted in young people remaining in education or training post 16. For example:

A training provider runs ANDP funded Summer schools for one local authority: 3-4 weeks engagement programme for learners with the potential of leaving school with no qualifications and becoming NEET. Since running this programme only 3 of the 58 learners have not moved directly into employment, education or further training. This programme won a National training Award in 2010 and is going from strength to strength, producing truly amazing results

8. Pan Wales, Careers Wales Destination figures show that more young people are remaining in education or training at the end of compulsory learning at 16 and as such the levels of those not in education, employment or training (NEET) at 16 has reduced. However, we have no evidence to show that the Learning and Skills (Wales) measure has had a positive effect in encouraging young people to progress to Welsh Government funded work based learning programmes at 16, in fact, since 2005 the number of 16 year olds entering work based training and /or employment has decreased, although we have also experienced a period of economic recession so causal relationships are difficult to establish. (See appendix 1)
9. Whilst a reduction in NEET levels at 16 is welcomed by all parties, NTfW is concerned that rather than addressing the NEET issue, the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure may be inadvertently delaying and thus compounding the NEET issue at 19 plus. Our initial examination of Careers Wales Pupils destination data at years 11, 12 and 13 between 2005 and 2010, appears to show a trend in NEET at year 13 increasing slightly (from 5% to 7%) at the same time that NEET at Year 11 has decreased from 7% to 5%. [See Appendix 1 for further details] Interestingly during this time entry into work based learning non-employed (Skillbuild/Traineeship) and employed programmes (Apprenticeship) has remained very low and almost static. Whilst analysis of data is often not as clear as it first appears and several factors could be affecting this, we believe this area warrants further investigation. We are all aware that youth employment up to age 24 is at a record low. Anecdotal feedback we receive from employers is that young people applying for jobs with them often lack employability and basic literacy and numeracy skills which becomes clear at application stage. Whilst employers do not expect young people to have a raft of work experiences and skills developed during these, some applicants are struggling to fill in forms, follow timetables etc. This is also reflected during the application process for apprenticeships and further education colleges report a similar trend in applications for their level 3 courses. Work based learning providers and colleges have to spend increasing amounts of time and money addressing literacy and numeracy needs so that young people can undertake the courses. This issue is not isolated to young people who are disengaged and NEET but also is seen in young people with GCSEs, A levels and degrees. Whilst the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure has encouraged more young people to remain in school completing vocational courses post 16, it could be argued that these are not always appropriate for progression and for some learners, their employability and basic skills issues are not being addressed and progression onto colleges or training providers who have the specialist support available to address these issues is being delayed.

Whether young people aged 14-19 have a wider choice for academic and vocational courses as a result of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009*;

10. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some schools have moved some of their post 16 offer to BTEC courses from 'A' level to cater for learners who would drop out at the end of year 12 (17 years) at 'A/S' stage as they are not academically able to meet 'A' level standard. However, they are remaining in a setting geared to progression onto university (which is a completely suitable route for many of their 'A' level students) but not for these learners who are already showing they cannot meet 'A' level standard. A school may alter its offer from an academic to vocational course for that learner, utilising their existing staff and resources but their knowledge of those pupils' potential progression routes is limited, with progression to university still being a main focus and sometimes no links made to apprenticeship providers or even further education course progression that is highly relevant. It could be argued that referral to the local college or training provider courses at 16 would have been far more appropriate, allowing the pupil to benefit from their much greater links with employers, the world of work and high quality links into these through work experience and/or competitions etc. Is the measure inadvertently encouraging such pupils to choose options which are not of optimal benefit as schools are promoting their post 16 vocational offer to learners already within their school?
11. In some areas options are increasingly transparent, for example the Swansea Guarantee website but in others, options are presented in a booklet that is individually tailored to each school. As such the information on non school post 16 options is often incomplete, very narrow and easily overlooked, if it even exists at all. Independent advice and guidance from the careers service is becoming increasingly targeted to those most in need due to risk of disengagement and as such this role is defaulting more and more to school staff who are not, and cannot be expected to be, aware of all post 16 options and thus at times, information pupils and parents receive is unintentionally biased at best. NTfW members' inclusion in awareness raising events is also limited and patchy across Wales. NTfW worked closely with three 14-19 networks at their local authority careers events, to ensure a range of training providers had interactive stands focused on a range of occupational areas to promote the benefits of Traineeships and Apprenticeships in these areas and vacancies. This received positive feedback from all involved including pupils but these events were limited not only geographically but also some events were only targeted at pupils at risk of becoming NEET. All schools have option evenings explaining post 16 options to pupils and parents but NTfW members are often not invited to these and so pupils and parents are not aware of the Traineeship and Apprenticeship opportunities available post 16. Where providers are invited, this is often on a piecemeal basis and not all relevant providers will be aware of the event.
12. In a few areas vocational option courses available with training providers at KS5 (post 16) are included on the 14-19 options menu. However, referrals are such low numbers that courses do not run. As these are new courses and there is difficulty promoting the benefits of these programmes to learners, providers are finding it hard to get the ball rolling. No doubt, once it has been delivered for a year schools will see the benefits of the programme. Some of these courses are considered the minimum operating standards for anyone wishing to work in growth sectors e.g. Health & Social Care.

What practical problems have been addressed in order to implement the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009*?

13. 14-19 curriculum planning is undertaken by local 14-19 networks. The makeup of these networks varies from authority to authority, with many having individual variations on a strategic group, an operation or curriculum group, a learning support group etc. As such, for training providers working across several geographical areas the picture is complex and it can be very difficult to make networks aware of how training providers can support them. Training provider representation on networks was historically patchy and often individual rather than representing the wider provider network in that local area. NTfW received Welsh Government Transformation funding 2009-2010 to employ 4 officers pan Wales to develop greater links with 14-19 networks. This was generally very successful in opening doors and ensuring NTfW wider representation on networks, although post project, the picture is still patchy with local variation regarding representation. From August 2011, the work based learning mainstream Traineeship programme was introduced and Welsh Government informed providers and networks that the Engagement strand of the Traineeship programme was now officially part of the 14-19 option menus as a post 16 choice. In some areas this has correctly led to the traineeship providers sitting on the 14-19 networks, often for the first time. However, representation continues to be patchy and in some areas they are not represented at all or are not on the correct groups to have any influence or share their knowledge and skills with working with disengaged and potentially disengaged young people. As such there is a risk that this important part of the curriculum offer will not be fully utilised in local curriculum planning, leading to duplication, needs being unmet in a timely way and potentially greater disengagement as the Traineeship programme's funding is available to 16 and 17 year olds only
14. NTfW have always believed that the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 was too limited in scope in that work based learning provision including Apprenticeship was never included as part of this. NTfW raised this during consultation at the time and was concerned its exclusion would lead to 'vocational' courses which do not meet employers' needs being delivered by inexperienced and unqualified staff. This means that 14-19 planning has always been undertaken without including apprenticeship provision in the area and without using the knowledge and experience of the high quality work based learning training provider network pan Wales. Networks often are not aware of the range of apprenticeship opportunities available locally or who the apprenticeship providers are. NTfW continues to raise awareness of this amongst networks but with limited success as it is outside the scope of the measure and therefore not included in any key performance indicators that networks are measured on. There is a lack of planning between networks and training providers in the area regarding sharing information on supply and demand of local apprenticeship opportunities in order to create planned pathway progression into apprenticeship. NTfW and Regional Provider Advocates continue to lobby networks to develop this and some interesting talks are taking place but this concept is in its infancy. This is reflected in NTfW's inability to meet the inquiry's request to find an employer in Wales who has changed their apprenticeship recruitment or taken on an apprenticeship as a result of the Measure.
15. The understanding of what vocational means - within the WBL sector it has a different meaning to how the schools have interpreted vocational choices as indicated above. Within 14-19, the term 'vocational' needs to be better defined to meet the needs of employers with whom these young people will eventually be seeking employment. E.g. currently young people coming out of school with IT qualifications but can't use common IT packages.

16. The definitions of levels in vocational courses differ from that in Apprenticeship and work based learning. For example, in vocational courses Level 2 is the standard GCSE equivalent level and Level 3 the progression level and equating to 'A' Level. In work based learning and apprenticeship, level 2 is a standard operational competence level with no automatic progression onto Level 3 as this is a supervisory level. To use a production line analogy- Level 2 would be the production line worker, who is able to work without assistance and make limited decisions themselves, whereas Level 3 would be the supervisor of that line and possibly several other lines too. Level 4 would be the factory manager and Level 5 the director who oversees several factories. This difference in levels is confusing to teachers, pupils and parents alike and is often not explained in options booklets when pupils are choosing their vocational options, which would allow them to develop awareness and plan their pathway of progression. Pupils may have completed a vocational Level 3 course in school and then be disillusioned and demotivated when they want to undertake an apprenticeship and have to do so at Level 2 Foundation Modern Apprenticeship as they lack suitable qualifications and experience and need to develop their skills to work at an operative level. With time, experience, skills development and increased competence, they may progress onto a Level 3 Modern Apprenticeship, as they are able to gain promotion and employment to a supervisory level in order to demonstrate competence and achieve a Level 3 Modern Apprenticeship. NTfW has worked closely with some 14-19 networks since the measure was introduced to explain this difference and understanding is improving among most network members but it remains an area for confusion still amongst pupils and their parents.
17. Training Providers have developed a greater understanding of the different points values relating to funding of qualifications provided through 14-19 funding. The main issue/problem yet to be faced by networks is the sustainability of these projects as ANDP funding is withdrawn.
18. Another potential issue is young people who drop from school or FE course part way through year 12, after the Careers Wales Pupil Destinations snap shot has been taken in October. Historically we have always seen peaks in NEET levels in January and July. NTfW Members fear we could potentially see an increase in NEET in this area, with learners having begun a programme of learning at level 2 or above in school or college and because of this, when they drop out, can only access engagement traineeship not level 1. It could be argued that these learners would have been better off leaving the school environment at 16 to progress to mainstream work based learning traineeship programme which is funded by Welsh Government. The learner would then have been able to access the specialist support needed on this programme to address their educational and social barriers to learning and progression onto higher learning (with a training provider or in college) and/or employment. (see point 10 above)
19. SEN and ALN progressions and options are an issue, as a key performance indicator of the measure focuses on Level 3 options at post 16. These young people often need Entry or Level 1 qualifications and already face multiple barriers and disadvantages to progression to higher level learning or employment
20. There is a real need for independent advice and guidance when pupils are choosing their options post 16, as well as at 14 when choosing courses with a view to progression at 16. The Careers service has traditionally fulfilled this role but as their funding and support needs to be focused to those with the greatest need who are at risk of disengagement, a potential vacuum could develop. The latest Edge/ You Gov Annual Stakeholder Survey report¹ reflects that generally parents remain the strongest influence on a pupils option choices, so it is important all

are independently informed of options. This survey also reflected a high proportion of parents and teachers feel they do not understand what an apprenticeship entails but are more familiar with the requirements of an A level or degree route and feel vocational qualifications are more suited to less able individuals. In Swansea, the 'Swansea Guarantee' an innovative new mechanism has been introduced to inform pupils, parents etc of their options. This initially focuses on what the young person wants to do, interests and progression rather than the usual initial qualification focus. As such, helping young people and their parents make an informed choice from a variety of qualifications options rather than focusing on an initial more narrow range of qualifications which may mean they unintentionally ignore other potentially suitable qualifications and progression pathways. There are definite regional and local variations in the area of pupil and parent awareness of the range of options available. Anecdotally, far too many young people 'stumble' into a work based learning Steps to Employment or Apprenticeship programme in their twenties when other options have failed for them, rather than being aware of it and making it an active first choice. The current average age of an apprentice is 26 years old. Careers Wales destination data shows that over the last 5 years, entry into work based learning from school has been consistently low and decreases at years 12 and 13 (See appendix 1)

21. Currently 14-19 networks have been funded through the Annual Network Development Plan (ANDP) as a pump priming measure to allow schools time to reallocate resources to allow new 14-19 vocational options to be mainstreamed. Funding is an issue and a dependency on the 14-19 ANDP has developed. Post ANDP it is questionable whether the 14-19 provision currently available can be sustained. Schools general funding is allocated individually to each institution and as such, this can act as a barrier to reallocating resources and preparing for further collaboration and course transformation post ANDP. Planning within and between schools can still be very influenced by institutional interests rather than the interests of young people pan authority, leading to varying degrees of duplication, wasted resources. This can act as a blocker

I have sat in meetings where schools have said they do not want to offer any additional vocational options because it would mean they would lose a teacher, despite the course being something they do not offer, in a growth sector and with credible outcomes into employment and apprenticeships.

Schools may want to grow their vocational offer to meet the measure but will not always start that planning process by looking at what other sectors could offer to support this collaboratively. They might have an award winning college or training provider in their local area with excellent progression figures and high quality training and resources on offer. Rather than explore how provision could be sourced to meet the learner's needs, the school will explore how they can use existing underutilised staff and physical resources and find accreditation to suit. Whilst saving money for that individual school in the short term, it is wasteful long term both for the individual institution as staff are kept on the pay role who are not fully utilised and very wasteful for Wales education budget as a whole which is already paying for a high quality course in FE or Work based learning that the young person could have directly accessed at 16 (but would have had to leave school and so affect school income) or the young person ends up leaving school and taking a more protracted route before entering further courses or apprenticeship or employment – a career progression that could have taken 3 years takes 5-6 etc. For the young person concerned they were not aware of this at the time and become frustrated at their slow progress etc

22. The way collaborative courses are planned and facilitated is still a challenge in some areas. Some localities have common timetabling to allow for greater collaboration between schools, FE settings and WBL providers. However, often transport then becomes the challenge as the pupils are transported to courses rather than the tutor travelling to the pupils or using e

learning methods (due to constraints on infrastructure or data protection issues). The common solution for this is to use taxis, not only to save time in a constrained timetable but also to address a 'fear' held by some curriculum planners that they are ultimately responsible for the learners and so need to reduce all risks to ensure pupils (not just 14-16 but often 16-19) get to the destination. Hence the proportion of transport budget allocated in ANDP and used for taxis is not only substantial part of the funding allocation for 14-19 provision but does not prepare young people for the reality of using public transport to access learning and work or develop and practice the skills needed to plan a journey once they leave school based provision. This often leads to young people entering work based learning who need support to develop travel skills and are not prepared for the weather, waiting for the bus or having to walk a short distance, thus creating another barrier to employment or further course progression.

23. In conclusion, the Learning & Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 has opened some doors with its emphasis on the need for networks to work in collaboration with training providers and colleges however, it is notoriously difficult and schools continue to look towards further education colleges first (as encouraged by the Measure which doesn't mention work based learning) without realising what training providers in their area can offer, both through mainstream funded courses and collaborative provision. On a surface and piecemeal level, the Measure has achieved its aim of increasing the amount of vocational courses on offer and reducing NEET at 16 and networks have met their performance indicators regarding the amount and types of courses on offer. However, in reality the offer is not always reflected in actual delivery due to take up issues and the full potential to develop a greater collaborative, embedded and sustainable solution to vocational training and ultimately increasing young people's employment opportunities not been optimised. Whilst individual schools and networks are working hard to find collaborative solutions to extend their vocational offer and develop learning pathways which can lead to employment, they are constrained in their scope by a Measure which has an essential flaw by excluding work based learning and by competitive funding systems which can act as disincentives to greater school, college and work based learning provider collaboration.

References

- ¹ EDGE Annual Programme of Stakeholder Surveys Report for You Gov 2009 available from http://www.edge.co.uk/media/17099/yougov_benchmarking_surveys_-_attitudes_to_learning.pdf

Appendix 1

Destinations of Yr 11, 12 and 13 School Leavers across Wales from 2005-2010. Data sourced from Careers Wales Pupils Destinations Surveys, available from <http://careerswales.com/prof/server.php?show=nav.3844>

		All figures shown are percentages and rounded up					
		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Year 11	Continuing FT education	76	76	78	79	82	83
	Work Based Training (non Employed)	7	7	5	5	6	6
	Work Based Training (employed)	2	2	3	2	1	1
	Employed	5	4	4	3	2	2
	Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)	7	6	7	7	6	5
		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Year 12	Continuing FT education	87	87	87	88	90	89
	Work Based Training (non Employed)	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Work Based Training (employed)	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Employed	5	4	5	4	2	2
	Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)	3	3	3	3	3	3
		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Year 13	Continuing FT education	79	80	80	80	80	79
	Work Based Training (non Employed)	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Work Based Training (employed)	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Employed	11	10	11	9	8	9
	Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)	5	5	5	6	7	7

The figures above appear to show a downward trend into employment across all three age groups in the last 5 years, which could be linked to economic conditions and high levels of youth unemployment. However, these learners are not being picked up by work based training either through non employed programmes such as Skillbuild and now Traineeship or through employed programmes such as Apprenticeships. There is a static and worrying trend in low levels of young people from all three year groups into work based learning, with the percentage decreasing through the year groups.



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Ms Claire Morris
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National Assembly for Wales
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25 November 2011

Dear Ms Morris

Inquiry into the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 - an initial submission from the Federation of Small Business in Wales

The Federation of Small Businesses is grateful to the Children and Young People Committee for the opportunity to submit evidence to the inquiry. The FSB represents the views of 10,000 small businesses and the self employed as well as the interests of all those individuals, partnerships and companies which together make up the largest section of the Welsh economy.

In assessing our response to the inquiry, at present, we can only provide an overview of the experience of our members in relation to the impact of the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 and whether the measure has in general benefited both the business community and the Welsh economy as a whole. I understand that we will be invited to give oral evidence on the 1 December 2011. We will have by then, been able to collect more empirical evidence on this matter.

Having spoken to a range of our membership on this matter, it is evident that there has not been enough time since the Measure was implemented to accurately assess its full impact on businesses in Wales. In particular, it is difficult to discern whether there has been any marked increase in the skill levels of young people moving into the labour market as a result of the Learning and Skills Measure (Wales) 2009.

In principle, however, the Learning and Skills Measure (Wales) 2009 provides movement in the right direction towards aligning the needs of businesses in Wales with the skill base of the workforce. Increasing the number of courses on offer to students between the ages of 14-19 and in particular the shift in focus towards vocational courses is to be welcomed.

However, The FSB would point out that the Measure is the means by which the framework for the delivery of learning is achieved and recognises that it will not of itself deliver a better skilled workforce. It remains concerned about and welcomes the current review of qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds. Other improvements in outcomes for learners need to be achieved if the skill requirements of businesses which are constantly evolving are to be met. It is important that the vocational courses provided are relevant to the work place and many businesses report an inability to find young people with the *relevant skills* to form part of their workforce, particularly in specialist and advanced manufacturing.

To achieve this it is imperative that the learning opportunities are delivered by individuals who have knowledge not only of the theory but also of the practical application of the newly acquired knowledge and skills. As one of our respondents stated,

"My main concern is that a number of vocational courses provided are not delivered by vocational experts for instance a geography teacher teaches 'his own' subject in the morning and then an engineering subject in the afternoon."

The development of new courses and modules to achieve the range of outcomes that will make the Measure a success need to be mirrored by the development of a skilled workforce of vocational trainers capable of delivering not only theory but knowledge of the practical application of the skills being learnt. These individuals are more readily to be found in the commercial workforce rather than in colleges or schools. Members have commented that they are willing and prepared to act as mentors and indeed as tutors but that there has to be an effective payment or financial support system to achieve this.

Ultimately, the local supply of jobs is a factor that needs to be considered when taking into account course provision and there is an obvious need for flexibility to cope with the changing nature of local economies. However, a scheme such as the Shared Apprentice Scheme has been welcomed by individual small businesses as employing even one apprentice has proven difficult due to costs.

The need to engage in this key policy area and to provide effective measures for SMEs to provide opportunities for apprenticeships was recently highlighted by the Wales Employment and Skills Board in their report *Skills for Jobs: Priorities July 2011*. In this respect and in others – see below – there seems to be a good deal of consensus as to what is required and indeed as to how it can be delivered, but it remains to be seen, at least on behalf of the employer, the Measure has done this.

Worryingly, and we are that that this is not something that is specific to the consideration of the implementation of the Measure we have anecdotal evidence to suggest that more needs to be done by local education providers to engage with businesses to ascertain their skill requirements and to react to demand from different sectors. New courses need to be founded on accurate Labour Market Intelligence and not on the latest educational fashions or trends. Courses need to be able to offer students engaging and stimulating learning but in the areas identified as required by the needs of businesses. Members do not always feel that the range of courses available reflects their needs as employers and question the degree to which institutions and training providers are aware of the exact need within their business community.

Looking again beyond the specific questions of the implementation of the measure, one of the primary concerns for small businesses in Wales is the level of literacy and numeracy among young people. While widening the course options available to young people could help align their skill sets with the needs of the Welsh economy, it is important not to forget that literacy and numeracy levels are fundamental to the success of any business, and too often levels of literacy and numeracy are below par necessitating retraining in the work place.

One respondent made the following comments:

"There are more people staying on in Full Time Education but Literacy and Numeracy - basic skills - levels are again a concern with employers having to do remedial work to get them to the expected level."

The FSB is aware that these comments resonate with the findings of numerous reports and surveys not least the analysis National Survey of Adult Skills in Wales, (2010) published by statistics Wales. The observation within the research which stated that improvements in numeracy have not followed those of literacy is of particular concern.

Taking these initial responses into consideration the FSB feels that there is a clear danger that the implementation of the Learning and Skills Measure has not necessarily built on the firm foundation of a clear understanding of the needs of businesses. There is also concern that the fundamental need to deliver on basic skills such as numeracy and literacy – whilst recognised by all concerned – is not being realised. As we have stated we are however keen to endorse the principles within the Measure and also welcome this enquiry.

I look forward to providing further information from our members and our own review of the learning and skills agenda on the 1st December 2011.

Yours sincerely,



Iestyn T Davies
Head of External Affairs
Federation of Small Businesses, Wales



Children and Young People Committee CYP(4)-11-11 Paper 4

Inquiry into the Implementation of the Learning & Skills (Wales) Measure 2009

Evidence from Careers Wales

Introduction

Careers Wales is pleased to submit evidence on the Learning and Skills Measure, 2009. Careers information, advice and guidance (CIAG) is one of the six Key Elements crucial to individual Learning Pathways for 14-19 year olds. The legislative basis for CIAG already existed, so was not covered by this Measure.

Currently, Careers Wales consists of six “not for profit”, independent companies, but we are working towards the establishment of a unitary organisation by April 2012. Through our contract with the Welsh Government, we deliver careers information, advice and guidance services to young people and adults across Wales. In addition, we support education institutions with the delivery of the Careers and the World of Work (CWW) Curriculum Framework through our Education Business Partnership (EBP) activities.

Our key purpose is to provide services that are impartial and independent and which support the learner to acquire career management skills and to make realistic and well informed decisions about individual learning/career pathways appropriate to their abilities, interests and career goals and aspirations.

Senior managers from all the careers companies have been involved at both the strategic and operational levels with all the Networks since their establishment. Across Wales, this has included chairing sub groups, and in one case the Network meeting itself, seconding staff, providing additional work focussed experience activities, undertaking the Learning Coach function, supplying statistical data, raising awareness of issues relating to the NEETs agenda, providing additional support to pupils who may become NEET and developing and continuing to support, on behalf of the Welsh Government the Key Stage 3 (year 9) Options Menu via Careers Wales Online (CWO).

The effect that the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 has had on young people aged 14-19 years;

The curriculum at Key Stage 4 (KS4) and Post 16 is now more relevant to a broader range of learners, given an increase in the range and breadth of the offer

and the provision of more vocationally orientated subjects. 14 – 19 Networks were already on the path to broadening the curriculum; the Learning and Skills Measure provided the legal framework to make the aim more readily achievable.

Careers Wales is aware of:

- Expanded choice for KS4 studies and the opportunities provided by collaborative courses (particularly college-based courses for learners in KS4) which have been particularly useful
- the work undertaken has embraced a range of practical opportunities to improve the provision of courses in the medium of Welsh, which has included cross border co-operation between 14 – 19 Networks.
- The collaborative arrangements in place have without doubt led to a larger mix of both academic and vocational subjects being made available at both KS4 and post 16. There has been a growth in learners opting for vocational subjects. However the vocational offer is still not regarded in the same esteem as the academic choices.
- In some instances, restrictions on Network budgets has meant that progression opportunities have not been available
- Although early days, young people generally seem to be gaining improved understanding of their skills and how these can relate to the world of work, more students appear to be able to achieve Level 2 due to the different approaches to accreditation and delivery (rather than the prescribed GCSE with coursework and exams only).
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that learners are better able to explain what they have learned and their enthusiasm appears greater for the more vocational courses than for some of the traditional subjects. No hard evidence but with increased numbers achieving accreditation, increased numbers are able to enter further learning.
- Progression opportunities – it is important that young people are made aware of progression opportunities post 16. They need to be aware that e.g. a hairdressing course at Key Stage 4 does not guarantee either a place on an FE hairdressing course or indeed a higher level course – students often find themselves repeating at the same level or elements of the course

Helping young people understand the implications of their choice.- It has been more challenging for young people and parents to understand the range and type of courses being offered and the need to present information and provide CIAG is key to supporting young people's decision making.

Careers Wales' advisers work in collaboration with learning settings supporting young people and their parents to understand the implications of the choices to be made in terms of future career pathways. Our advisers currently provide this service to all year 9 pupils through class sized group sessions and individual interviews. However, as a result of recent budget reductions, our work with this year group and at this transition stage is likely to be very substantially reduced. A particularly important aspect of this work is the impartiality we bring to the process.

Understanding the needs of the local and national labour markets. Whilst learner choice is important in deciding which courses should form part of the offer,

this needs to be tempered by the realities of the labour market and the present and future opportunities likely to be available. Careers advisers are able to inter weave this into the careers guidance process. A particularly good example of collaboration exists in Gwynedd and Ynys Môn. Networks were aware that various reports both national and local had identified that either young people did not have the necessary understanding of specific sectors or that they lacked the skills those industries felt were important.

Working with Careers Wales North West – a set of sectors were targeted including Outdoor Education, Engineering and Hospitality and Catering. A series of meetings were held, including local FE and WBL providers and employers, aimed at identifying what action was needed and what sort of provision would suit the need. As a result, schools in the area now offer Level 2 qualifications in the specified sectors all of which include input from local employers. Whilst it is too soon to establish whether or not there will be an increase in young people entering those careers in the future – the courses have given learners experiences and information about the range of opportunities in those sectors as well as raising awareness of the required skills.

Parents: In several schools the measure had lead to the school reviewing their Careers and World of Work programme at KS3. Lead by Careers Wales, they have introduced the options earlier in the year, worked on sessions to introduced Careers Wales online and the options menu along with the career choices, and held special parents' evenings to inform the parents not just about the measure and the options but about the world of work for the future. These evenings have now become an integral part of the options choices and several schools have now also introduced a guest speaker from industry to talk in small groups to the parents and learners.

However it's important to realise that studying at 14+ for hairdressing will not necessarily lead to a career in this area. The skills gained include learning about customers, communication and running a business more than the practical skill. These skills can be used in a range of work and learning contexts not just the vocational field. No-one imagines that a learners undertaking a vocational course pre 16 will be qualified to work in that area – the focus is on the skills they learn to enhance future employability skills.

With regard to young people who have Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD), the Learning and Skills Plan has identified needs which are not always being fulfilled by the Learning Providers e.g. taxi to and from home, additional support on the programme of learning. Parents' expectations are being raised but not always fully met causing great distress to them and their child.

CWO - working with the Welsh Government Careers Wales Association has developed an administration and reporting functionality for schools to input their KS4 and post 16 curricula offer and the take up of qualifications/courses on CWO. The Welsh Government requires that schools and 14-19 Networks use the CWO KS4 and post 16 curricula reporting functionality to ensure compliance with the Measure. The Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 has strengthened the 14-19 developments on CWO by adding value to existing services.

Hanna, a Year 9 pupil at The Bishop of Llandaff Church-in-Wales High school commented that: *The site is good because the interactive games encourage you to learn about different things that would help you. It is also good because it shows what each*

subject involves in case you choose to study it. Completing options online makes it easy to use and easy to change!

In the academic Year 2010-2011:

approximately 41% of all maintained secondary schools in Wales used the Free Choice survey with their learners.

- nearly 50% of all maintained secondary schools in Wales used the Key Stage 4 Options system.
- 13,589 Learners accessed their Learning Pathway Document using CWO

We expect the above statistics to increase as the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 embeds itself in future years. For further information relating to the effect the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 has had on young people aged 14-19 Years, please contact the Learning Pathways 14-19 team in the Welsh Government.

Whether the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 has had any effect on the numbers of young people choosing to stay on in education or training after the end of compulsory education at age 16;

Careers Wales undertakes an annual destinations survey of school leavers from secondary schools across Wales from Years 11, 12 and 13 for the Welsh Government. Learners from Special schools are included in the survey but not those from FE colleges or independent schools.

Information collected by Careers Wales is provided below and identifies the following 'five year trends' from 2006 -2010 pupils

- the upward trend in return to full-time education rates over the period
- The higher return to education rates for females as compared to males
- The trend for young people entering the labour market is downward, as illustrated by the destination data for the three main entry points: Work Based Learning, both employed and non employed status and employment
- the 1.7% reduction in year 11 NEETs from the high level in 2008, n.b there is a 1.8% increase in year 13 leavers who are not engaged in education, employment or training

It is difficult to disaggregate the impact that each of the complex range of causal factors may have on the continued rise in Year 11 pupils returning to full-time education. It is quite possible that a broader curriculum offer brought about by the Learning and Skill Measure and 14 – 19 Network activities has had a contributory factor, it can also be argued that the trend may have been impacted upon by some of the following factors:

- a growing cultural acceptance by young people of the importance of a qualification base in securing future career opportunities.
- Partnership work that has taken place to reduce NEET numbers at 16 years of age

- The current economic position is that there are less employment /apprenticeship opportunities for school leavers
- A failure to achieve parity of esteem with pupils and parents between labour market routes (work based learning and employment) and learning opportunities available in schools and colleges;
- A failure to secure larger number of apprenticeships and inequities in 16 and 17 year old school leavers competing with older applicants for available apprenticeships.
- Fewer young people achieving level 1 and 2 qualifications may now enter work based learning due to the lack of progression opportunities available. In too many instances, the only options open to young people in work based learning are to undertake a different qualification at a level at which they have already achieved.
- The introduction of Education Maintenance Allowance providing financial support means staying in education it becomes a viable option for some
- More choice at post 16 learning – more choice in the learners host institution. The more academic schools previously only offered AS and A2 in their 6th form but now have a range of vocational subjects at both L2 and L3

Support for clients in danger of becoming NEET –

Across Wales there are differing levels of engagement in supporting the NEETs agenda by 14 – 19 Networks; some have left the matter to CYPPs and have no substantive strategy, others have a strategy but have not taken practical implementation actions, whilst some Networks are very proactive in supporting multi-agency work connected to the NEETs agenda. Examples of good practice include:

- All networks in North Wales have taken ownership of the NEET agenda and have introduced courses and opportunities aimed at ensuring that young people are kept engaged in education up to 16.
- a project run in partnership between Careers Wales and a local Work based learning provider (WBL) provider to offer an accredited extended work experience programme. Learners attend the local WBL provider to gain accreditation in Workskills and then access a work placement where they are able to apply their learning. Young people who undertake this course are usually quite challenging but all learners who completed the programme (90%) gained some accreditation with 86% achieving either a Level 2 BTEC Award or a Level 2 BTEC Extended Certificate. There have also been successes in terms of employers offering apprenticeships to these young people.
- The Wrexham and Swansea case studies commissioned by the Welsh Government showed the effectiveness of multi agency approaches and evidenced the support provided by 14-19 Networks
- A secondee from Careers Wales Gwent has been funded for the last 3 years as a Transition Worker – in this area there has been a reduction in the NEETs figure to 3.24% (provisional data)
- Report for Blaenau Gwent on Destinations 2010 indicated that NEET figures for those learners on collaborative courses were comparable

with those on mainstream courses, indicating that the Measure may have a positive impact on supporting potentially NEET young people.

- A number of institutions are putting on courses aimed at those who potentially may be NEET on leaving year 11 – some of these courses receive funding through ANDP/Pre-vent (ESF)

Year 11 Key Destination Trends 2006-2010

	Continuing in Full time Education	Continuing in Part Time Education	Work Based Training - Non employed status	Work Based Training - Employed status	Employed - Other	Known not to be in Education, Training or Employment (NEET)	No response to survey	Left the area	Total number in cohort
Male									
2010	80.0	0.2	6.8	1.5	2.7	5.8	1.3	1.7	18703
2009	79.1	0.2	6.4	1.6	2.6	6.5	1.9	1.8	19168
2008	75.6		5.7	2.5	4.4	7.9	1.9	1.9	19958
2007	72.4		6.3	3.1	5.8	7.7	2.8	1.9	20108
2006	71.2		8.3	3.1	5.7	7.1	2.6	2.1	19916
Female									
2010	85.7	0.1	4.8	0.5	1.1	4.9	1.0	1.8	17956
2009	85.5	0.1	4.6	0.4	1.3	4.9	1.4	1.9	18197
2008	83.0		4.5	0.7	2.2	6.3	1.3	2.0	19091
2007	82.1		4.1	1.0	2.9	6.0	1.9	1.9	19288
2006	80.5		5.5	1.0	3.1	5.7	2.2	2.0	18881
All Pupils									
2010	82.8	0.2	5.8	1.0	1.9	5.4	1.2	1.7	36659
2009	82.2	0.1	5.5	1.0	2.0	5.7	1.6	1.9	37365
2008	79.2		5.1	1.6	3.3	7.1	1.6	2.0	39049
2007	77.2		5.2	2.0	4.4	6.9	2.4	1.9	39396
2006	75.7		6.9	2.1	4.4	6.4	2.4	2.1	38797

The Networks have worked to provide more courses that will engage the potential NEET young people and provide additionality in terms of personal support provision. The latter may well be reduced this coming year in view of budget reductions in the Networks and personal support not being within the Learning and Skills Measure.

However, there is still a serious need to appoint an agency to co-ordinate the activities of multi-agency partners in addressing the NEETs issue. This specifically applies to functions such as “Keeping In Touch” strategies and Information Sharing Protocols.

CWO - The Administration system supports the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 for the “Local Curriculum offer” and the “Take-up of offer” for KS4 and 16-18. Learning Providers are responsible for updating CWO with their Local Curriculum offer at KS4 and 16-18 from a qualifications search facility driven by DAQW (Database of Approved Qualifications in Wales). The data entered into CWO is available in a suite of reports accessible by Learning Providers, 14-19 Networks, and the Welsh Government.

In addition to the above, the KS4 “Take-up of offer” is also collected via CWO. We are currently working with the Welsh Government in relation to the “Take-up of offer” for Post 16. Working collaboratively with the Welsh Government in this way, will provide a full picture of those qualifications offered and those qualifications elected by young people in Wales.

Whether young people aged 14-19 have a wider choice for academic and vocational courses as a result of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009;

A wider choice of courses necessitates high quality careers information, advice and guidance, and other learner support in order that learners can make appropriate and timely choices

Careers Wales’ view is that young people now do have a wider range of option choices at both Key Stage 4 and post 16. This is due in part to the activities of 14 – 19 Networks prior to the introduction of the Learning and Skills Measure and not simply a reaction to it. It is however true to say that the Measure was successful in providing an auditable framework against which the provision of opportunities could be measured and via which targets and timescale for achieving the requisite offer could be applied at Network and institutional level.

However, there seems to be a danger that in some areas, duplication of courses is happening (e.g. at KS4 Hairdressing, Construction and Mechanics are becoming more widely available in school), but the progression from here once clients have left is not always straightforward. There is some evidence of clients leaving school having completed level 2 courses e.g. in Salon Services having to repeat the level 2 learning or even go back to level 1 once they have left school and started in FE or WBL provision.

With regard to a wider choice in academic subjects, there is very little evidence to show that young people intending to apply for HE are in practice choosing more vocational subjects – rather they are tending to stay with the more traditional courses which they see as being linked to HE requirements.

Increased collaboration between providers has meant that progression routes from entry/ level 1 to level 2 have improved. The lack of progression routes in the courses offered pre and post 16 has largely been addressed – this was an early criticism of the Measure.

The choice is greater for learners in the 'middle' band at 14+ Parents and learners who are more likely to continue to study for A levels are less likely to be comfortable with the 'wider choice'. Where Networks and colleges have collaborated on the 'pathway' vision there is clear progression for the learners which increases choice at 16+. However there are examples of learners achieving level 2 qualifications and repeating some of the content at 16+. For those working towards level 1 – the potential opportunities post 16 may have reduced due to constraints with the work based learning provision. The potential progression into employment (apprenticeships etc.) has been somewhat staggered by the current economic downturn.

The potential for accrediting skills and learning gained through Careers and World of Work (CWW) has been a positive one for many school who have delivered an effective CWW programme – courses such as Edexcel Worksills and WJEC Preparation for working life (along with the WBQ and other awards like ASDAN) are being made available to a range of learners and not just those following an alternative curriculum.

There is some evidence that the Measure has improved choices for learners at level 1/ 2 – borderline pupils who may otherwise not have engaged or who would have struggled to select options that would have interested them. The number of young people who become NEET has also reduced. For this group of learners their curriculum has become more balanced.

An example of good practice is: Cardiff and Vale College have provided courses (EVS in Cardiff and Fast Forward the Vale) that target those NEET young people by offering foundation level courses, alternative enrolment dates other than September. This offers more options to disengaged post 16 NEETS who may have started 6th form or college in September only to drop out soon after thus aiding the work of Careers Wales Post Education services and the learning coach team (Careers Wales and Cardiff/Vale local authorities).

It is important to note that a structural and strategic problem exists in the Networks ability to influence the provision of Work Based Learning opportunities at local level, given that contracts with providers are negotiated centrally by Welsh Government; consequently difficult for them to holistically manage the overarching offer of access to learning opportunities for all Post 16 learners.

There appears to be mixed experiences for young people who have Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD). Anecdotal evidence includes the following:

- LDD clients in mainstream schools in Cardiff have benefited from a wider choice of vocational options which has often been of more value in their own opinion than being restricted to more traditional and academic subjects. We have had many positive “success” stories fed back via clients Annual Reviews where by a client who has really struggled with the school environment has excelled in a more work based environment.
- This seems to be true for many clients who have a statement for emotional and behavioural difficulties and those clients who respond to a more practical approach i.e. those clients with certain specific learning difficulties
- With regards to our special schools, many have engaged with local colleges to provide link courses. This is often a positive experience for the young people and fits in well with the post 16 curriculum offered at most special

schools who have a focus on the world of work and moving towards independence / semi independence and developing life skills. However we have experienced problems with progression in cases where young people have been accessing a link course with some success (supported by school staff) but have been turned down by local college when they apply for a post school placement as they, as an institution, cannot meet the support needs of the clients. This has caused considerable upset to some learners who feel they have been given false expectations.

However,

- Since the new WBL programmes have been in place, LDD clients with more complex needs and who stay on until the age of 19 can no longer access the Engagement level provision and are signposted directly to JCP Work Programme. Some concerns in regard to the appropriateness of this route for often vulnerable and complex clients.
- Reduced FE provision for LDD clients in some areas has had an impact on these clients. They have had to consider alternative provision which is not the appropriate for them e.g. they would apply for motor vehicle and end up on a brickwork course. There appears to be a lack of funding to support these learners during their time at college.
- When the provision does not meet the needs of LDD clients the result is that they will drop out of training and are very likely to become NEET.

CWO - Learning Providers are responsible for updating their “Local Curriculum offer” and “Take-up of offer” for KS4 and 16-18 using the Careers Wales Online website. To further support this process a central Administration area has been built for 14-19 Networks and Regions to centrally create Partnerships, with the ability to share courses with other Learning Providers in a Partnership or across multiple Partnerships.

The Partnerships development enables CWO to produce reports for 14-19 Networks and the Welsh Government that supports the “Local Curriculum offer” and the “Take-up of offer” for KS4 and 16-18 where courses are, General or Vocational and are offered collaboratively in Partnership with other Learning Providers.

‘The Year 9 Options ran very smoothly and empowered parents to take a greater role in the process. The report analysis was very fast and allowed for changes to be made to options available, and react to pupil demand.’ (Deputy Head, St Julian’s School, Newport).

In the academic Year 2010-2011:

- All maintained secondary schools completed their Local Curriculum offer for KS4 and 16-18 using CWO to submit to 14-19 Networks and the Welsh Government.
- All maintained FE colleges completed their Local Curriculum offer for 16-18 using CWO to submit to 14-19 Networks and the Welsh Government.
- All maintained secondary schools completed their “Take up” of offer for KS4 using CWO to submit to 14-19 Networks and the Welsh Government.
- Reports supporting the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 were run 32,351 times in the academic Year 2010-2011.

Careers Wales companies have produced resource materials to support learners, parents and the schools in using the Options Menu.

What practical problems have been addressed in order to implement the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009.

The Learning and Skills Measure, whilst bringing about improvements in choice and options for learners, has created a number of issues. These include:

Timetabling issues such as if a student misses a day they can lose a substantial number of curriculum hours. Examples of how these problems have been addressed are; the creation of common timetabling in Network areas, schools creating more choice by offering a greater number and wider variety of courses, video conferencing of lessons in rural schools and the restructuring of KS4 curriculum have allowed students to spend full days in options areas, thereby ceasing the disruption of travelling a few times a day and those students attending college on set days missing valuable school lessons.

Travel issues include some learners not wanting to travel to other providers thus limiting their own choices; students arriving late for sessions having travelled from one venue to another; students attending college missing school based lessons; those more rural schools being too far apart to make travel between them viable and schools underscoring and not meeting the Measure.

There is also a cost in terms of time and money for education institutions and Networks. Travel challenges have been met quite effectively post 16 by Cynnal in parts of North Wales through digital learning. Learners can post questions, take part in forum debates, receive electronic feedback from their tutor and share their ideas with peers both in the classroom and outside.

Welsh medium provision –The bilingual dimension has been challenging for some schools where the nearest school offering Welsh medium learning is further away than their local school. Many schools have met this by providing their own courses as the local FE colleges did not always have the staff available to offer the course in Welsh; and through cross border collaboration with other Welsh medium schools

Progression – As mentioned earlier in this evidence, there are continuing concerns with regard to progression opportunities for learners. As yet, there seems to be no real evidence of providers being able to resolve these issues.

The main practical issues for **Careers Wales Association** have been:

- The work of the Careers Wales Association in developing Careers Wales Online as a vehicle to collect data on the provision of curriculum opportunities by provider and Network;
- Developing an Online facility through which young people in Year 9 in schools can make option choices on line;
- Ensuring that statutory obligations contained in the measure for learning providers and Networks to provide Careers Wales with information on the curriculum offer open to pupils are met. This has been achieved via the

provision of bespoke prospectuses produced at Network or cluster level and via the provision of curriculum information on Careers Wales Online.

At the local company level:

- Consideration of the relationships between Learning Pathway Documents, the process of recording and reviewing achievements and Careers and World of Work programmes;
- The design of Learning Pathway Documents, including helping learning providers to understand the benefits of utilising the web based Learning Pathway Plan available via Careers Wales Online;
- Developing working arrangements with learning coaches employed by individual schools and / or Networks;
- Where requested, supporting the continuing professional development requirements of learning coaches.

Learning Coaching

The vision for the Learning Coach role is for a greater emphasis on support for learning. Many existing professionals already carry out elements of this function. Evidence shows that increasing the support for learning in this way pays dividends in learners' achievement even though they may have less direct taught curriculum time as a result.

Currently there is general acceptance that Learning Coaching is a function which can be undertaken by a number of individuals rather than a single person, although there does exist a number of staff whose main job role, if not all, is that of a Learning Coach. Access to Learning Coach support has improved for learners.

The 14-19 Networks were given the responsibility of ensuring that the Learning Coach function was fulfilled but there has been little prescription on how the model should look. Consequently, the provision not only looks different in each Network area, but within each learning setting. This means that benchmarking quality provision is difficult.

There has also been a common misunderstanding with regard to how the support elements of Learning Pathways – Learning Coach, Personal Support and Careers Information, Advice and Guidance inter relate. To a large extent, the answer lies in the titles:

Learning Coaching supports learners by focussing on learning styles and identifying any barriers to learning and working with the learner and the learning settings to reduce these barriers

Careers advisers provide impartial support to learners to develop their career management skills, and improve their self awareness and awareness of opportunities post compulsory education in order to make realistic decisions at the post 16 / post 18 transition phases.

Personal support is provided by many organisations to address specific identified issues e.g. drug abuse, housing problems, behavioural problems, disengagement

The Careers Guidance function plays a key role in helping young people to test out their career and learning ideas, ensures that their aims have been explored and challenged, helps them evaluate their individual strengths, interests, abilities, experiences and learning styles and raises their aspirations in making informed choices about their learning / career pathways. It has a key role in explaining the consequences of shorter term learning options on longer term career goals.

However where there are barriers to learning identified in the course of providing careers guidance services, the Careers Adviser refers to a Learning Coach. The roles of the Learning Coach and the Careers Adviser are complementary but a Learning Coach cannot replace the qualified careers adviser. Where the relationship works well, there is a clear, shared understanding of roles and responsibilities; this ensures that there is effective signposting and referring to each other and to others, offering support to the learner.

There is now a significant number of individuals who have undertaken the accredited training and who are now working as Learning Coaches. These individuals generally work with learners who need intensive support to reduce their barriers to learning but do not always have sufficient time in the week to undertake this support. Learning Coaches target different learners dependant on the institution, ranging from those who are potential NEET, to the C/D border learners, to a universal entitlement.

Good practice examples from Careers Wales include:

- Careers Wales staff have been seconded to work on introducing Learning Coaches/Learning Coaching into local schools and to look at their training and development needs. One company is involved in providing training for the Learning Coaches
- A Careers Adviser seconded as the Learning Coach Co-ordinator. This co-ordinator role is involved in meeting regularly with Learning Coaches in the area to share good practice and to liaise closely with educational establishments to ensure that the Learning Coach training is meeting their needs.
- In North Wales a number of Learning Coaches are also based in non-educational establishments such as in Careers Wales, Work based Learning Providers, Youth Justice Service and the Youth Service.
- Learning coaches in several schools take referrals also from Careers Advisers after their guidance interviews with young people and help the learners action the Careers Adviser's recommended points. This team approach has enabled young people to be supported when they most need it when planning for their transition at KS 4.

JOYCE M'CAW
On behalf of Careers Wales

Agenda Item 7



Headteacher or college principal decision to entitlement

1. How frequently are head teachers and college principals having to exercise their powers under the Measure to remove a learner's entitlement to follow a course of study?

Swansea	Once
Vale of Glamorgan	Very rare
Torfaen	None so far
Torfaen	None
Merthyr	A few in specific circumstances as given below.
Flintshire	Not had to do this
Wrexham	I am aware of between ten and five cases over the last four years involving students at this school where the providers/lecturers at the college have tried to pressurise us to remove entitlement based on behaviour or attendance issues. With the attendance issues these were within the normal problems faced by a school and the behaviour issues were relatively minor and would have resulted in sanctions below exclusion level being applied in a normal 11-16 setting. I have refused to remove entitlement in these cases as it was not appropriate and the issues were dropped when I pursued this with their senior staff. We have never had serious incidents where entitlement needs to be removed by our college provider. We have removed entitlement from a student on a collaborative course here due to his inability to work around vulnerable learners without bullying them. This individual also had to be removed from the special school collaborative provision for the same reason.
Gwynedd	None so far!
Newport	This has been rare as we have attempted to work alongside learners to listen and help them achieve their entitlement
Ceredigion	This has not been necessary
Pembrokeshire	None so far

2. There are grounds for removing entitlement listed in the Measure, including another person's health and safety and disproportionate expenditure. What are the most common grounds for removing an individual learner's entitlement to a course of study?

Swansea	Behaviour
Vale of Glamorgan	H&S for potential violence out of school on advice of police that were involved
Torfaen	Non viable courses
Torfaen	N/a
Merthyr	We only ever remove a Year 10/11 entitlement for newly arrived EAL pupils in order for them to receive more intensive English as that is the language they will be doing their examinations in.
Flintshire	I would have thought expenditure, but it hasn't applied to us
Wrexham	The most common reason I have been approached to do this is over poor attendance. Obviously we do not in schools remove students from courses when their attendance is poor. We do support the provider by chasing the student about their attendance but we don't support removal from the course on these grounds.
Gwynedd	N/a
Newport	Common areas have been cost and the courses running with poor take up. There may well be transport issues next year if the LA decide schools have to pick up the bill!
Ceredigion	Not applicable
Pembrokeshire	Not applicable

3. Are head teachers and college principals aware of many complaints and appeals regarding process of determining student entitlement?

Swansea	None received thus far
Vale of Glamorgan	None
Torfaen	One; The entitlement could be met at a college but parents were not happy.
Torfaen	None that I am aware of. As a general point, the school continues an open and honest dialogue with students and parents concerning the choice of an appropriate post 16 curriculum for that particular student. Through discussions and reaching agreement, the need for 'exercising powers' does not exist.
Merthyr	none
Flintshire	We are not aware of any.
Wrexham	I receive complaints regarding placement of students where a course is offered in two settings and a student is sent to the setting they wouldn't have chosen, and also with students who are refused entry onto the able students programme due to their grades in KS3. This has not yet gone to formal appeal but the complaints have to be dealt with by the school in the first instance, who did not make the decision over entry.
Gwynedd	None
Newport	To our knowledge complaints and appeals have been rare. Entitlement offers are very good and seem to be providing excellent pathways
Ceredigion	No
Pembrokeshire	No

Phased Implementation

4. Although not due to be fully implemented until September 2012, in practice has the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure been implemented across Wales already? Are there any geographical variations as a result of some local authorities being slower to implement the Measure than other areas?

Swansea	On paper - in practise I'd say it's not
Vale of Glamorgan	Variations not an issue at the moment but will have the potential to happen as funding is less local [consortia based] and may not meet LA needs; as funding gets less / vanishes; as 14-19 embeds and other initiatives take over and WG priorities. The best voc practice is developed where this is in the schools with links to colleges, not students spending time on the road; potential issues funding for transport and to pay course costs?
Torfaen	None that I am aware of.
Torfaen	Both schools and Local Authorities seem to be implementing the Learning and Skills (Wales) measure already in Torfaen. The concern as we move forward is the lack of a replacement for the NPFS model (deleted in February 2010). Practically, Wales will have 22 models of funding Post-16 education in April 2012. The implications for the Learning and Skills (Wales) measure without a suitable funding system are very significant
Merthyr	The Learning and Skills measure is implemented and has been for, certainly 2 years, possibly three, although the impending MLQ will mean that schools will have to start reducing their offer as staffing reduces over the next 2 years. regards
Flintshire	Already in place
Wrexham	It is in place in Wrexham already.
Gwynedd	Yes - as far as I aware! We are a very small school, and the measures have certainly been implemented here.
Newport	Newport LA has insisted it was implemented from September 2011 and there has been a coordinated approach to implementation under close scrutiny from WG.
Ceredigion	The Measure has been fully implemented at Penglais School. Smaller schools with Sixth Forms less than 150 have more difficulties in implementing the curriculum demands of the Measure - offering 30 subjects inc 5 Voc at KS4 and Post -16
Pembrokeshire	It is in place

Digital Learning

5. Has digital learning been useful in the delivery of Welsh medium education?

Swansea	N/a
Vale	N/a
Torfaen	N/a
Torfaen	Digital Learning contributes to the success of Post-16 Welsh Medium Education in the following ways: 1. It allows the delivery of Post-16 courses through Video Conferencing (Welsh Medium) between schools e.g. Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw and Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni. This is supported by support staff being present in the VC lessons, ensuring the students are in attendance and prepared and ensuring that the technology works and visual and aural communication is good. Technology does break down on occasions and this does affect the delivery of some lessons. Students are not attracted to study courses that are delivered only by VC. However, courses offered with a mix of teacher contact and Video Conferencing does work. 2. Improved ICT facilities have allowed post-16 students to research and develop their knowledge. Digital Welsh Medium resources are limited but are developing due to the co-operation of the Welsh Medium schools through CYDAG.
Merthyr	N/a
Flintshire	N/a
Wrexham	N/a
Gwynedd	Yes - there are many excellent examples of working together!
Newport	N/a
Ceredigion	Not applicable
Pembrokeshire	N/A



**Evidence to the Children and Young People's Committee
on the Implementation of the Learning & Skills (Wales) Measure 2009
on behalf of Cardiff 14-19 Network**

The information below is in addition to the evidence previously submitted from a regional perspective.

I would like to thank the committee for the opportunity we had to present a regional report on behalf of SE Wales and to engage in dialogue with Committee Members on a crucial debate about the educational opportunities that are now available to young people through the Learning & Skills Measure. I would like to take this opportunity to add some specific views drawing on the experience of the Cardiff 14-19 Network. Some illustrative diagrams to show the arrangement of the Cardiff 14-19 network are also attached. Each partnership provides a local area curriculum with the exception of the Inclusion Partnership which nevertheless avails itself of the courses offered through the other partnerships.

Entitlement

Prior to the Measure there was considerable variation in the curriculum offer being made to learners in different institutions. For example, schools with affluent catchment areas would offer a very small selection of vocational course because of the comparatively few learners requiring them. These learners were then at a significant disadvantage compared to their peers in more disadvantaged neighbourhoods where the choice was greater. By bringing schools together in partnerships and creating the local area curriculum many of these inequities have been removed as schools collaborate, pool students and put on a good selection of vocational programmes. This has been a significant benefit from the Measure.

The emphasis on Learning Coaching as an entitlement for young people has also raised this aspect of support work in schools to the benefit of many students.

Qualifications in the local area Curriculum

Although there is a separate review of Qualifications taking place nevertheless this has connections with the Measure. Only qualifications in the DAQW can count towards the local area curriculum. There are currently many vocational qualifications in the DAQW that do not have performance points attached to them (although they should have – there is an administrative backlog). Then again not every qualification with performance points is eligible to be used by schools in calculating their performance measures. There is considerable change going on in England and decisions of a commercial nature being taken by Exam Boards which may limit and restrict the choices available in Wales. I believe the Committee needs to be mindful of these changes and the tensions they are creating. Westminster, WG, Exam Boards, schools, industry & commerce and the interests of the learners are all pulling in somewhat different directions. The Learning & Skills Measure sets the learners needs clearly at the forefront and we need to work hard to ensure that the needs of learners in Wales are being met and protected.

Pre-16 and Post-16

The implementation of the Measure is affecting these two groups of students differently.

With respect to Pre-16 we have been able to provide a greater range of vocational offers and match the aspirations and interests of a greater number of learners. We have also been able to extend this offer to a wider ability range than in the past. Both of these are positives and standards of achievement continue to rise. With learners at the more disengaged end of the spectrum these vocational courses are often the only thing that they attend. They provide a lifeline and a way of keeping them engaged and often has a positive impact on their ability to hold down courses back in school. With progression routes developing to post-16 we are seeing increased retention rates into post-16. This is also being reflected in the reduction of young people who are NEET.

In post-16 we are seeing higher staying on rates. The more significant benefits here are for learner's choice. As I mentioned in the evidence session, our surveys show that up to 60% of Year 11 learners did not get their 1st choice combination of subjects and had to settle for something less. There are also benefits in keeping alive minority subjects which might otherwise disappear without the ability to collaborate – Music, Geology, Classics, Modern Languages, Welsh 2nd language, a number of vocational courses at Level 3 that are now offered to 6th forms but would disappear from the offer if it was not for the Measure.

Whilst post-16 courses can be self-sustaining in terms of funding the same cannot be said for pre-16 vocational programmes where a WG premium is needed to support them. Since group sizes on these courses are frequently limited to 12 (about half the size of a GCSE course) staffing costs are naturally increased and rise above the levels that schools can pay for from their Age Weighted Pupil Units of funding (AWPU). Hence my assertion in the evidence session that complete removal of additional funding support will result in the collapse of this provision.

To illustrate this point from a Cardiff perspective our collaborative vocational provision has grown from around 200 learners a few years ago to around 1500 now with about 100 courses offered to Y10 & Y11. We deliver this against a budget of £1.4 million where the 14-19 grant contributes 60% of the costs and schools contribute 40%. The schools could not cover the 60% component if it was withdrawn and this would severely restrict the opportunities for learners in Cardiff.

Other gains

In discussions with our local partnerships of schools they have identified other positives to emerge from this new way of working introduced by the Measure. They cite the increase in exposure of young people to those from different cultures, the mixing of learners from different schools, the impact on particular communities where learners are very reluctant to travel but are now doing so (often right across the city) in order to access their courses and building confidence and skills.

For the future

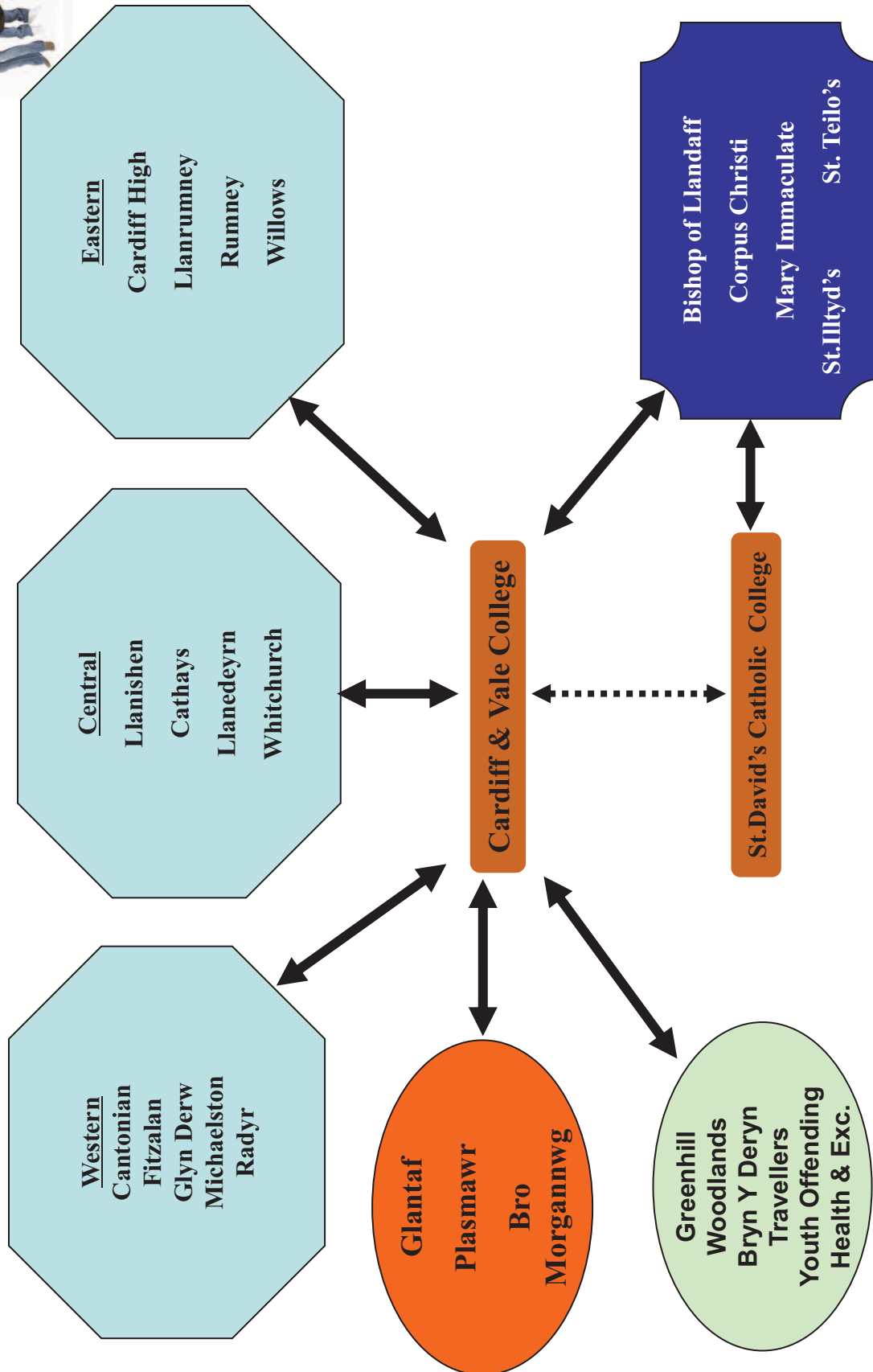
We are looking for consistency in policy and continuation that will allow us to fully embed the changes and positive benefits. We do not want more change and uncertainty.

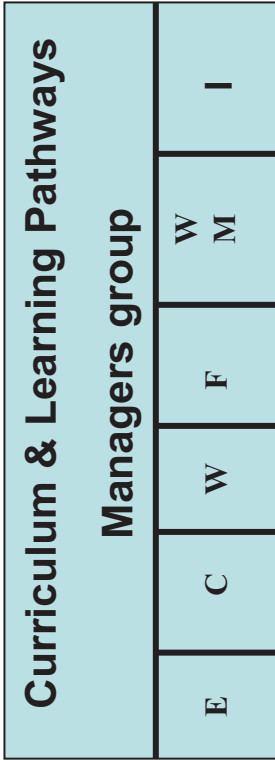
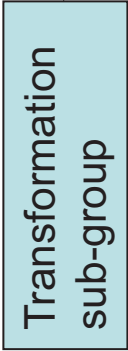
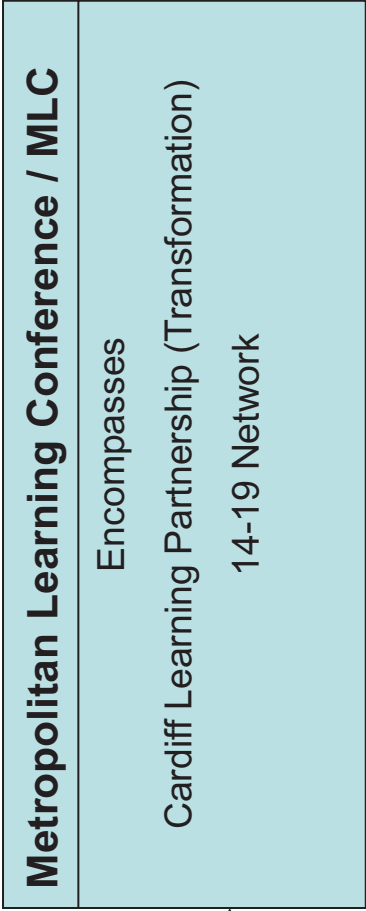
We believe that the Measure and its requirements are mutually compatible with the efforts to improve standards of achievement. The Measure is quite clear that provision should be built around high quality and that if we deliver on that by default standards will rise.

We are looking for funding streams that will allow for the long term sustainability of vocational programmes.

With regard to regional working we see that there are good opportunities for mutual support and sharing successful solutions and expertise.

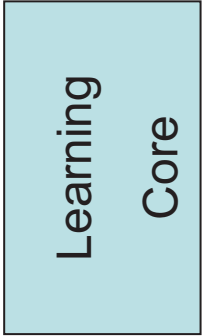
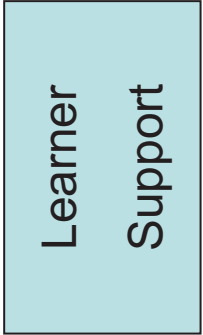
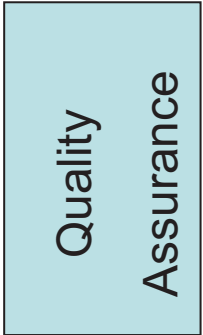
John Fabes, 14-19 Network Co-ordinator for Cardiff, November 2011.





The Local Partnerships: →

Working groups ↪





Transforming Education & Training Provision in Cardiff

4 Local Area Curricula 16-18

Underpinned by

WBTPs

Welsh

FE Sector

Central & Eastern ↔ Western

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Twilight & Saturday provisions



Eich cyf/Your ref
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Christine Chapman AM
Chair of the Children and Young People Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

31st October 2011

Dear Christine

Thank you for your letter of 29 September 2011, following the Committee inquiry into child health, in which you list a number of questions which the Committee did not reach during the meeting.

I will address the questions in the order of your letter.

1. To what extent is the current *Sexual Health and Wellbeing Action Plan* focused on unintentional teenage pregnancies and how effective has it been so far at decreasing rates of unplanned teenage pregnancy?

The Sexual Health and Wellbeing Action Plan for Wales, 2010-2015, has a number of strands to tackle unintentional teenage pregnancies. These include the continued approach to improve the universal provision of sex and relationship education, improved sexual health services alongside targeted intervention for those most vulnerable to teenage pregnancy and the promotion of the long acting reversible contraception (LARC) to teenagers who present to services already pregnant, following delivery or termination of pregnancy.

Phase 1 of the project, being led by Public Health Wales will target under 17s who present to services already pregnant. It is estimated if 50% of this cohort received contraception, particularly LARC, pre-discharge from termination services or delivery units, teenage pregnancies would be reduced by 10%. Phase 2 of the project will target vulnerable young women, particularly those in care in areas where teenage

conception rates are high. In line with NICE recommendations, they will be offered one-to-one interventions and access to LARC.

The rates of teenage conception have reduced and in 2009 provisional figures were 40.1 per 1000 women aged 15-17 compared with 38.2 in England. Rates were highest in Merthyr at 67.8 and lowest in Monmouthshire at 28.2.

2. How much of the £450k being invested in preventing teenage pregnancy is targeted at reducing second pregnancies among teenage girls?

The £450k being invested in preventing teenage pregnancy is over a three year period. The funding will be used to provide evidence based interventions amongst those most vulnerable to teenage pregnancy, and strengthen the capacity of existing services to tackle young people's sexual health. In 2011/12, Public Health Wales is concentrating on the 2,500 pregnant teenagers who present in our maternity and termination of pregnancy services to try and prevent a repeat pregnancy.

3. According to figures produced by RNIB Cymru, around 43 per cent of children have never had an eye examination. General Ophthalmic Services (GOS) data shows that the uptake of sight tests for children varies across the Local Health Boards. What action does the Welsh Government intend to take on this issue?

One reason only a small percentage of children have eye tests at opticians is that vision screening is offered at the start of the school year for 4 – 5year olds. This screening is carried out by school nurses. Welsh Government officials will look at children's vision screening during 2012/13 including the role of optometrists in pre-school testing.

The provision of all health services, including children's eye screening, remains the responsibility of the Local Health Board (LHB). It must work with the Local Authority (LA), voluntary sector and others to assess the needs of the local population and to plan and prioritise their healthcare provision within the resources available.

Each LHB and LA in Wales undertakes a joint needs assessment for their area. This will subsequently inform the development of their local health, social care and well-being strategies, which will indicate how the health and well-being needs of the local population would be met.

The Welsh Government leads the way in the UK in its provision of primary eye care services. We should do everything we can to prevent avoidable sight loss and increasing public awareness is one of the things we can look at. Making eye services quicker and more accessible will also contribute to preventing sight loss. We aim for more services to be provided at local opticians across Wales closer to where people live.

4. According to Asthma UK, the cost of an emergency admission to A&E for people with asthma is three times more than the cost of treating somebody in primary care. Are Local Health Boards asked to monitor asthma among children and young people in their community and is this reported to the Welsh Government?

In Wales, 260,000 people are treated annually for asthma. One of my top priorities is for LHBs to manage chronic conditions more effectively and reduce hospital admissions for conditions such as asthma. The Welsh Government has published the All Wales Standards for Respiratory Services for Children and Young People and these Standards underpin LHB service planning and delivery. One of the Key Actions within the All Wales Standards requires that all children and young people with asthma are monitored regularly and have an action plan which is reviewed at least every 6 months. These action plans are about supporting children and young people to manage their asthma and stay out of hospital. LHBs are not required to report on these action plans to the Welsh Government,

5. In his Annual Report, the Children's Commissioner for Wales raises concerns about a lack of NHS provision for children with ADHD. Are you satisfied that the provision of services, including support groups and therapies as well as medication for children with ADHD is sufficient?

The Welsh Government's policy on ADHD is based on guidance issued by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE). It is the responsibility of individual LHBs to make sure these recommendations are met and I expect LHBs to take account of the guidance and work towards it.

We recognise there is some variation in specialist medical provision across Wales, due to the ongoing problems of recruiting to both Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and community paediatric consultant posts. However, all areas are looking at provision of integrated neuro-developmental services (covering ASD and ADHD) to maximise existing resources and ensure that CAMHS services are robust and equitable.

To this extent Children and Young People Plans should promote effective partnership arrangements to deliver local interventions such as parenting support and school support programmes. Officials and key stakeholders are also meeting in November 2011 to explore the mapping of workforce skills to maximise the experience available within the CAMHS workforce; how it interacts with the deliverers of frontline services; and how this compliments the setting of intelligent targets for services. The aim is to ensure that children and young people get early mental health support at a community level.

The CAMHS service mapping and monitoring process currently monitors audits of eating disorders, early onset psychosis, ASD and depression, and introduction of ADHD NICE guidelines into this is under discussion.

6. What are your views on over diagnosis of, and over prescription for, ADHD?

The diagnosis and treatment of ADHD is guided by NICE guidelines. As with all NICE guidelines the responsibility for delivery lies with the LHBs, who offer a range of multidisciplinary paediatric and CAMHS expertise throughout Wales, including audit against these standards. The guidelines recommend that medication along with behavioural intervention is the treatment of choice for the majority of cases. Evidence from the Durham mapping exercise carried out over 3 years on Welsh CAMHS indicate that the number of cases being treated are appropriate for the expected numbers in the population given national figures. We are currently discussing intelligent performance targets for CAMHS in the forthcoming year that will look to ensure local services are auditing themselves against national standards.

I also agreed to provide additional information on the following:

7. Contradictory comments made by the Royal College of Midwives about midwife numbers in Wales.

The Royal College of Midwives (RCM) referred to the number of midwives employed in Wales over the last three years. My official met with Helen Rogers, Director of the RCM, to discuss the discrepancy in midwifery staffing numbers. Whilst the RCM was correct in stating that midwife numbers were reduced in 2009/10, it cannot be assumed this means there is a shortage of midwives. NHS organisations are responsible for ensuring they have the appropriate number of staff to meet a fluctuating demand. Midwives have a crucial role in caring for mothers and their babies. They are assisted by midwifery support workers who play a vital role in ensuring that our maternity services are of a high, safe standard. In terms of midwife numbers, since 1999 there has been an 11% increase in the number of midwives in Wales.

Based on the workforce planning tool 'Birth Rate Plus' (the workforce planning tool used in Wales as recommended by the RCM, an indicator of the consistency of numbers of midwives to match changing birth rates), we are training the appropriate number of midwives. All LHBs are required to meet the midwife numbers as identified by Birth Rate Plus. It has been agreed that, in future, when discussing midwife numbers, the figure the RCM and Welsh Government use will be LHB compliance against Birth Rate Plus recommended staffing levels.

There will obviously be year on year fluctuations which influence education commissioning numbers so they are responsive to service change, and to ensure that all students in training have employment once qualified. The number of midwives trained in Wales each year depends on the needs of the service. The number of midwives trained is based on what the NHS determines it will require to meet future demand through its workforce plans. The number of nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff has increased from 27,806.4 whole time equivalent (WTE) in 2008 to 28,168.4 (WTE) in 2010 - an increase of 362, or 1.3%.

LHBs in Wales are reviewing maternity, gynaecology, neonatal and child health services as they work to continually improve services and maintain patient safety and care. As noted above, Midwives will continue to have a crucial role within these services.

Despite the cuts to the overall Welsh budget by the UK Government, we are maintaining our investment in the health service in Wales. We are also continuing to invest in the next generation of healthcare professionals, including midwives, by funding over 2,000 new training places from September 2011. This brings the total number of non-medical healthcare students in training in Wales to 6,462 - a 41% increase on 1999. This is a clear demonstration of our commitment to the NHS.

8. Where do recruitment problems in neonatal services exist?

General recruitment problems have been reported for medical staff in paediatrics which includes neonates in many Health Boards, with an 18% vacancy rate in recruitment to Wales training posts currently reported by the Wales Postgraduate Deanery. Some of these are filled by locum and temporary staff but this leads to a more expensive and less well trained workforce than if training posts were filled substantively, and inevitably impacts on rota staffing in all parts of Wales. Work is being undertaken by the Postgraduate Deanery along with LHBs and Trusts to manage the impact of vacancies to ensure safe service delivery to patients.

9. The number of mother and baby beds available to women suffering with post-natal depression.

In line with NICE guidance, all pregnant women in Wales are now asked about any past history of mental health problems so that those with an increased risk can be identified and referred for support, advice and care planning to minimise the development of postnatal depression.

There are three designated beds at the University Hospital of Wales in Cardiff as a Wales wide provision, bed usage during the year standing at 64%. North Wales commissions beds as required in England, as locally and as practical as possible for women suffering from post-natal depression. All teams in Wales provide care via Community Mental Health Teams as locally as possible with support and advice from the specialist service in South Wales. The main aim would be to return mother and baby home as soon as possible with a comprehensive package of care.

10. Information on Female Genital Mutilation.

Deinfibulation operations are performed in Cardiff through the gynaecological clinic, subject to the elective surgery waiting list. The patients are identified either during pregnancy, when they are offered the reversal operation by 20 weeks to allow time to heal before childbirth. Alternatively, women come forward through awareness raising sessions run by the Health Board.

More widely the Welsh Government is taking a range of action to tackle Female Genital Mutilation as part of the delivery of our "Right to Be Safe Strategy" and the details are set out below.

The CMO newsletter 51 issued in September 2011 and distributed to all Doctors and Dentists in Wales, contained information and advice for health professionals on how to deal with concerns about Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and also forced marriage.

The Welsh Government Forced Marriage (FM) sub group held a strategic planning day on Monday 28 March 2011. The aim of the day was to bring together strategic stakeholders to develop a high quality integrated plan to prevent and provide services for women and children at risk of female genital mutilation in Wales and to widen the impact of the forced marriage forum by engaging key stakeholders in addressing FGM. The planning day was developed by the Black Association of Women Step Out (BAWSO) and Cardiff & Vale in conjunction with officials from Community Safety Division, Welsh Government.

The planning day was well attended by organisations across Wales, who identified some key areas for further work including research, service provision and information giving. These areas will be considered as part of the Welsh Government's commitment to preventing and raising awareness of violence against women and domestic abuse, as outlined in the Welsh Government's 'Right to be Safe' Strategy.

At the planning day, BAWSO launched their 'storyboard' which had been developed with funding provided by the Welsh Government. This storyboard is used by health professionals with pregnant women who have been identified as being at risk of carrying out FGM on their daughters.

During 2010-11, we also funded South Wales Police to provide 'training for trainers' on forced marriage and honour based violence – the course also included a module on FGM.

The implementation plan that accompanies the 'Right to Be Safe' contains an action to: 'Develop and publish a specialist leaflet on Female Genital Mutilation for professionals and frontline staff working in criminal justice, health, education and social services.' Drafts leaflets have been circulated for comment to stakeholders and officials are currently finalising the leaflet for its publication.

11. An evaluation of the effectiveness of the MEND programme in Wales.

The MEND programme has been in place since October 2008 as a grant funded pilot programme, and rolled out across Wales. In the period October 2008 - April 2011, 111 programmes were delivered and 795 children (average age 10.4 years) benefited directly from the programme. In addition their parents or carers and siblings who attended will also have benefited. Average programme attendance and drop-out rates were similar to the UK national average, of 80% and 10% respectively.

The following outcomes have been achieved with participants:

- On average the Body Mass Index (BMI) decreased from 27.7 kg/m² pre-MEND to 26.8 post-MEND, leading to a mean 0.9 BMI unit reduction.
- Waist circumference, an indicator of abdominal fat, was reduced on average by 2.3 cm post-programme.

- There was on average an 8.7 beats per minute decrease in recovery heart rate following the 3-minute step test, demonstrating an increase in fitness levels.
- Post-programme levels of physical activity rose and children were doing moderate to vigorous activity for 1.4 additional days per week, whilst a 6.1-hour decrease in sedentary activities per week was also observed post-MEND 7-13, as television viewing and computer usage were reduced from 15.9 to 9.8 hours per week.
- The MEND Programme also had a positive impact on the mental wellbeing of the participants. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is a parent-rated measure of common psychological symptoms in childhood. The mean score on the SDQ was within the low needs range and it is encouraging to note that post-programme the average SDQ score was even lower. This suggests that participating in the MEND Programme is associated with improved psychological functioning.

Taken together, the results indicate that the MEND Programme is having positive healthy outcomes for the participating children.

All MEND participants and their families are encouraged to continue their physical activity after the programme ends through signposting to local authority led leisure activities, links to the 5x60 scheme and Dragon Sport scheme in schools, and other local clubs.

As with all community based referral programmes it is demand led and some areas have been more successful than others in recruiting families to the programme – this is not dependant on population or rural areas versus town areas, as Powys has been one of the most successful areas to recruit and deliver the programme. The programme becomes more cost effective when the maximum number of 15 on each programme is recruited.

40% of families come to the programme by self referral from a marketing leaflet given out to all relevant age children in school. About 20% are from GP or dietetic referral. Current mechanisms in place to improve recruitment include a 'Talking about Weight' training day for school nurses and community professionals that work with families. This aims to develop their skills in raising the issue sensitively and being able to talk to families about concerns for their child's weight. Evidence shows that many parents do not see that their child is overweight or obese and overweight is seen as normal.

Kind Regards


Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
 Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
 Minister for Health and Social Services

cc: Gwenda Thomas AM, Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services



Eich cyf/Your ref:
Ein cyf/Our ref: SF/LG/06259/11

Christine Chapman AM
Committee Chair
Children and Young People Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

31st October 2011

Dear Christine,

Thank you for your letter of 18 October seeking clarity on two points discussed during an evidence session by the Children and Young People Committee as part of its inquiry into children's oral health in Wales. The questions are highlighted in bold and the response follows:

- **Can you clarify the role and responsibilities of school nurses and whether they are involved with the Designed to Smile initiative?**

School nurses are recognised as public health nurses through registration on the Specialist Community Public Health Nursing part of the Nursing and Midwifery Council register. They are key to promoting, improving and protecting the health and wellbeing of school aged children and young people to ensure they achieve the best possible health. Their role includes assessment and health surveillance, health promotion and health education, immunisation and disease prevention, safeguarding the health and welfare of children and young people and supporting children with medical, social and emotional needs. It also involves the direct delivery of interventions, as well as working with and supporting other partners in the delivery of specific services for children and young people.

Designed to Smile is a specific initiative that school nurses support locally but do not directly deliver. For example, within public health programmes the delivery of consistent messages is crucial and school nursing services have regular contact with Designed to Smile teams in order to receive updates and share information. They support the initiative by continuing to address oral and dental health as a part of the broader public health work they are involved in. A variety of dental and oral health promotion is delivered through Personal and Social Education (PSE) sessions, Health Fairs, Community Health Days, and many other locally organised events. School nurses, where necessary, will liaise with the Designed to Smile Team to deliver specific sessions that link in with other initiatives or

where a particular need has been identified. They will also integrate the key messages about oral and dental health into work they undertake in relation to smoking cessation and healthy eating.

An example of where local circumstances can determine the need for more direct involvement is where the school nursing service collects the Designed to Smile consent forms and follows up any outstanding forms that have not been returned. This activity helps to maximise participation in the initiative.

- **Can you also establish whether the changed roles of school nurses are dependent on locality?**

The school nursing service aims to deliver services that improve the health and wellbeing of school aged children and young people and are responsive, effective, sustainable and adaptable to change to ensure they continually develop and improve.

'A Framework for a School Nursing Service for Wales':

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/health/publications/health/reports/nursing/?lang=en>

outlines the revised school nursing service. This provides the national direction in which the school nursing service in Wales is expected to develop in order to create equitable services that are responsive to the needs of local populations.

Kind Regards
Lesley

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref SF/LA/6176/11
Christine Chapman AM
Chair
Children and Young People
Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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CF99 1NA

2 November 2011

Dear Christine,

At my attendance at the Children and Young People Committee on 19 October, I agreed to write to provide further information on local authority spending on nursery education.

All local authorities have a statutory duty to make available a free part-time Foundation Phase place for all children from the term following their third birthday. Funding to support local authorities in meeting this duty is provided through the Local Government Revenue Settlement.

In order to distribute the resources provided through the settlement, in line with authorities' need to spend to deliver a standard level of service, the distribution formula reflects the drivers of spend for the range of different services covered.

The funding for the Foundation Phase is included in the 'Nursery and primary school teaching and other services' Indicator Based Assessment (IBA) for the 2011-12 financial year. This IBA also covers other spending on delivery of nursery and primary school teaching and overall showed a settlement share of £957.6m.

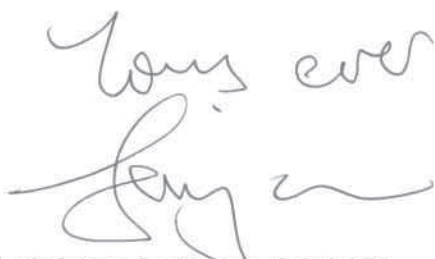
The ability of unitary authorities to set their own spending priorities remains an important part of the Welsh Revenue Support Grant (RSG) distribution system. Therefore, the service IBA is not intended for use in determining individual authorities' budgeted expenditure on particular services.

Local authorities also receive a specific grant to support the implementation of the Foundation Phase across the whole 3 to 7 age range. This grant is used for four purposes:

- Employment of classroom assistants;
- Employment of a Foundation Phase Training and Support Officer;
- Delivery of Foundation Phase training programmes; and
- Qualified teacher support of the funded non-maintained settings delivering the Foundation Phase.

In the 2011-12 financial year a total grant of £89m was distributed to local authorities using the same formula as that for the 'Nursery and primary school teaching and other services'.

I trust that this provides you with the clarification requested by the Committee on 19 October.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leighton Andrews', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Leighton Andrews AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Gwenda Thomas AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Plant a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/SF/LG/6126/11

Christine Chapman AM
Chair, Children and Young People Committee
The National Assembly
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

3rd

November 2011

Dear Christine

Following our appearance at the Children and Young People Committee on the 19 October, we agreed to provide further information on two issues.

Total Expenditure on the Provision of Wheelchairs for Children

Wheelchair services for children are commissioned by the Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee on behalf of all Health Boards. The total funding for adult and children's wheelchair services in 2011-12 is £14.2 million, including the additional investment announced by the previous Minister. The adult and children's services are funded together as one total service and the costs of services for children are not separately reported.

Children and Family Services

In August 2011, the Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services approved a proposal to consolidate the two Children and Family Organisation Grant (CFOG) programmes that are delivered in the Welsh Government. The rationale for this proposal was that as a result of the changes in ministerial portfolio, following the May 2011 election, both strands of the programme came under the remit of the Department for Health, Social Services and Children and therefore would ensure better support to the Deputy Minister's new portfolio and extended priorities. The bringing together of the two programmes also provided an opportunity to focus the grant programme on key outcomes for children, young people and families that reflect more current priorities.

The current combined budget for 2011-12 of the two programmes is £4.421 million, this figure has been set for the next two financial years of 2012-13 and 2013-14.

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Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

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The current combined budget for 2011-12 of the two programmes is £4.421 million, this figure has been set for the next two financial years of 2012-13 and 2013-14.

On 1 September 2011, the Deputy Minister launched the application process for the CFOG funding round of 2012-14. This exercise finished on 31 October 2011 with officials starting to evaluate each application. The final amount awarded to third sector organisations will be dependant on the results of this assessment. Details of the successful applicants and their allocations are due to be finalised in early December 2011 with the organisations being notified by the end of December.

Kind Regards
Lesley

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

Yours ever,
Gwenda

Gwenda Thomas AC / AM

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

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



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Christine Chapman AM
Chair
Children and Young People Committee
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3rd

November 2011

Dear Christine

Thank you for your letter of 6 October requesting a progress report on guidance for professionals to assess children's health care needs.

This is an extremely complex issue and to allow sufficient time for debate to take place an informal consultation document issued earlier this year. The document was informed through engagement with stakeholder groups comprising representatives from Local Health Boards, NHS Trusts, Local Authorities, Association of Directors of Social Services and Education in Wales, Public Health Wales, the All Wales Community Children's Forum and Welsh Government policy officials.

The informal consultation document issued on 31 March 2011, under cover of a letter from Paul Williams, Chief Executive NHS Wales, to a range of stakeholders including the Children's Commissioner inviting comments by 23 May. The letter advised responsible organisations that until definitive guidance was issued the draft guidance contained in the informal consultation document should be used.

Forty detailed responses were received from a range of agencies including social services, primary and secondary health services, professional and third sector organisations.

Following further refinement a formal twelve week consultation on new guidance is expected to start before Christmas.

Kind Regards
Lesley

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

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Christine Chapman AM
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15 November 2011

Dear Christine,

Thank you for your letter of 1 November, following my appearance before the Children and Young People Committee for scrutiny of the Education and Skills MEG Draft Budget.

Capital

The Education and Skills capital budget has seen a reduction of some 40% in line with the reductions imposed by the UK Government on the Welsh Government's capital budgets as a whole. Despite the reduction in capital funding to the Welsh Government, every project which has been approved by my Department under the transitional stage of the 21st Century Schools Programme is going ahead in 2011/12 and over the subsequent 2 years until these projects are completed.

Furthermore, in response to these reductions in capital funding available, my department now operates a single capital investment fund. Implementing this single fund has involved rationalising all the separate single capital funds streams that were operating and deploying capital investment in education on a more strategic and prioritised basis.

The 21st Century Schools programme is a priority which we remain committed to delivering. As a programme of capital investment it will build upon the £415.2m that is already being invested in the schools infrastructure under the transitional funding arrangements. In summary, the first tranche of transitional funding supported 32 projects across Wales with over £77m of Welsh Government grant. These projects are largely completed. Under the next two phases, over £337m of Government support has been committed for a further 34 projects from the Vale of Glamorgan to Anglesey and from Pembrokeshire to Monmouthshire. These projects are underway

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and include 26 new schools and 15 Further Education learning centres which have received grant support of £75m.

The first stage in developing the 21st Century Schools Programme was the submission of Local Authorities' Strategic Outline Plans (SOPs). Due to the reductions in capital, we asked Local Authorities in August to re-visit these plans based on the grounds of affordability and revise them based on a 50% Welsh Government intervention rate and against other prioritisation criteria. The revised plans will be submitted on 18th November. As a first stage in implementing the programme, the running order of the first wave of outline programmes will be announced in early December. These outline programmes will then need to be backed by more accurate costed proposals as they develop through the stages of the HM Treasury 5 Case Business Case model.

My department's capital budget in the indicative plans from 2013-14 onwards will be circa £100m. Therefore, in determining the running order of the programme, a planning envelope of £600m (based on the Welsh Government intervention rate of 50%) will be applied to this initial outline programme planning stage. This will assist Local Authorities significantly in their forward planning and goes far beyond the capital planning of the former Schools Buildings Investment Grant (SBIG) that largely operated on a formulaic and annualised basis. The transitional funding arrangements alone have seen funding deployed over a three year timescale - a period much more realistic to support the delivery, for example, of a large secondary school.

The planning envelope to be applied to this first wave of 21st Century Schools will provide Local Authorities with greater assurance of funding over a longer time period. It will also allow for a more realistic timescale for them to secure funding from alternative sources in addition to the Welsh Government grant support, such as the realisation of capital receipts and improved revenue savings to increase their borrowing capacity.

You refer in your letter to the capital allocation to local authorities. My department's capital programme (as described above) will support Local Authorities' programmes of investment and those projects outlined in their plans for the first wave of investment. The capital allocation announced by the Minister for Local Government and Communities is an unhypothecated 'general allocation' and, whilst there is a share allocated to the Education and Skills MEG, it is the responsibility of my colleague to announce his plans to the authorities concerned.

I believe this demonstrates the strategic vision behind our capital programme and the practical steps we are taking to deliver major improvements at a time of significant budget cuts by the UK Government.

14-19 Learning Pathways

I am pleased to tell you that all but eight schools are already meeting the full requirements of the Measure and I am confident that all schools will be compliant by the September 2012 implementation deadline. Securing wider choice for all learners will necessitate schools and colleges working together to provide common local curricula and this in turn is likely to mean that some learners will need to undertake

study at more than one setting in order to follow their chosen course. I do not think that we should underestimate the added benefit that this can bring to learners in terms of the opportunities to study in other learning settings, learning with young people from other schools and colleges and undertaking courses that would not be viable to run at individual institutions.

However, it is important that learner travel is kept to an absolute minimum and the movement of learners should be the last rather than first resort and should only be considered once all other options, including the use of modern technologies and the possibility of the teacher/ lecturer travelling have been considered. Where learners will be required to travel we expect it to be restricted to the start and end of the school/college day to minimise its impact on the learners. I know that some local authorities are working to develop integrated transport solutions and to maximise the use of all available transport resources available to them.

The Committee may wish to consider the results of research which was undertaken last year on behalf of the South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortia (SWWITCH) into the impact of 14-19 Learning Pathways on transport. The report on the research identifies examples of good practice, both within the region and in other local authority areas. The research concluded that a more efficient delivery of 14-19 Learning Pathways could be achieved by ensuring that there was a robust mechanism to integrate transport planning throughout the decision making process to develop and implement learner timetables and course options.

The report has been shared with all 22 Local Authorities and officials continue to work closely with networks to support them in ensuring that the impact of travel is kept to a minimum.

To access the 14-19 Learning Pathways grant funding, the regional consortia will have to develop Regional Network Development Plans, which have to be agreed by the Welsh Government before any funding is released. The development of regional working, like collaborative working, is an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary process, that will take a number of years to mature.

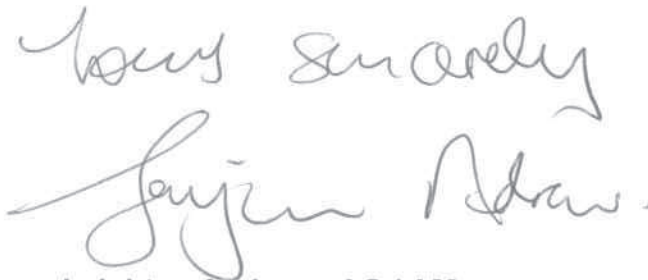
I am certain that the move to regional working will provide a greater focus on collaboration during the planning process on both inter authority and cross-boarder collaborative working. The savings being made from the Learning Pathways BEL will be incorporated into the School Effectiveness Grant and this, as I mentioned in my evidence to the Committee, will be available to those local authorities which are prepared to co-operate in regional consortia working.

DFES grant funding will continue to act as a lever for the development of collaborative working. My officials are working closely with local authorities to help reduce unnecessary duplication, unsustainable class sizes and ensure that as much funding as possible is directed to front-line services. For the reasons outlined above I do not foresee that there will be a need to use the powers available to me under the Measure to compel local authorities, schools and colleges to collaborate; but I will do so should the need arise.

Nursery Education

I wrote to you separately on the additional information requested at Committee in my letter of 2 November.

I trust that this provides you with the clarification requested by the Committee on 19 October.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Leighton Andrews'.

Leighton Andrews AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills