



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

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

**Dydd Mawrth, 13 Hydref 2009
Tuesday, 13 October 2009**

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

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

Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol
Committee members in attendance

Eleanor Burnham	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Angela Burns	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Christine Chapman	Llafur Labour
Irene James	Llafur (dirprwyo ar ran Lynne Neagle) Labour (substituting for Lynne Neagle)
Helen Mary Jones	Plaid Cymru (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) The Party of Wales (Committee Chair)

Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance

Lynne Hamilton	Cyfarwyddwr y Grŵp Gwella Busnes a Buddsoddi Adnoddau, Adran Plant, Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau Director of Business Improvement and Resource Investment Group, Department of Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills
David Hawker	Cyfarwyddwr, Adran Plant, Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau Director, Department of Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills
Jane Hutt	Aelod Cynulliad, Llafur (y Gweinidog dros Blant, Addysg, Dysgu Gydol Oes a Sgiliau) Assembly Member, Labour (Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills)

Swyddogion Gwasanaeth Seneddol y Cynulliad yn bresennol
Assembly Parliamentary Service officials in attendance

Tom Jackson	Clerc Clerk
Annette Millett	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Helen Roberts	Cynghorydd Cyfreithiol Legal Adviser
Anne Thomas	Gwasanaeth Ymchwil yr Aelodau Members' Research Service
Siân Thomas	Gwasanaeth Ymchwil yr Aelodau Members' Research Service

Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 12 p.m.
The meeting began at 12 p.m.

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions

[1] **Helen Mary Jones:** Croesawaf **Helen Mary Jones:** I welcome Members to Aelodau i'r cyfarfod arbennig hwn, a diolch this meeting, and thank them for being

iddynt am fod yn barod i ddod i'r cyfarfod arbennig hwn y tu allan i'r amserlen arferol. Atgoffaf bawb fod croeso iddynt ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg a bod offer cyfieithu ar gael. Gellir defnyddio'r clustffonau hefyd os oes gennych broblemau clywed.

willing to come to this meeting outside of the normal schedule. I remind everybody that they you are welcome to speak in Welsh or English and that translation facilities are available. If you have hearing problems, the headsets can also amplify the sound.

[2] Atgoffaf bawb o amgylch y bwrdd ac yn yr oriel i ddiffodd unrhyw ffonau symudol, mwyar duon ac unrhyw beth tebyg. Nid yw'n ddigon i'w rhoi ar 'dawel', gan eu bod yn amharu ar yr offer cyfieithu a darlledu. Nid ydym yn disgwyl ymarfer tân, felly bydd unrhyw larwm yn golygu bod problem go iawn a bydd y tywysyddion yn dangos y ffordd allan inni.

I remind everybody around the table and in the public gallery to switch off their mobile phones, BlackBerrys and other electronic devices. It is not enough to put them on 'silent', as they interfere with the interpretation and broadcasting equipment. We are not expecting a fire alarm test so if we hear an alarm, it means there is a real problem. The ushers will tell us what to do and point us towards the safe way out.

[3] A oes unrhyw Aelod am ddatgan buddiant dan Reol Sefydlog Rhif 31? Gwelaf nad oes. Yr ydym wedi derbyn ymddiheuriadau gan Lynne Neagle, ac yr ydym yn disgwyl Irene James i ddirprwyo ar ei rhan.

Does ane Member wish to make any declarations of interest under Standing Order No. 31? I see that there are no declarations. We have received apologies from Lynne Neagle, and we expect Irene James to join us as her substitute.

12.01 p.m.

Craffu ar Gyllideb Ddrafft Llywodraeth Cymru Scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget

[4] **Helen Mary Jones:** Croesawaf y Gweinidog a'i swyddogion, David Hawker a Lynne Hamilton. Gwn fod pobl eraill yn yr ystafell hefyd a all helpu'r Gweinidog yn ôl yr angen. Diolch ichi am fod yma, Weinidog, ac am y ddau bapur yr ydych wedi'u cyflwyno. Mae rhai o'r cwestiynau wedi'u seilio ar y papur gwreiddiol, felly os oes angen ein cyfeirio'n ôl at yr ail bapur, mae croeso ichi wneud hynny. Os yw pawb yn gytûn, symudwn yn syth at y cwestiynau.

Helen Mary Jones: I welcome the Minister and her officials, David Hawker and Lynne Hamilton. There are other people in the room who may be able to help the Minister if necessary. Thank you for being here, Minister, and thank you for the two papers that you have presented to us. Some of the questions are based on the original paper, so if you need to refer us back to the second paper, you are welcome to do so. If everyone agrees, we will now move straight to questions.

[5] I will start with the first question to the Minister. In your draft budget report, you say that tough decisions have been taken in order to free up resources for more pressing priorities. Could you talk us through some of the tough decisions that you have had to make with regards to budgets for children and young people?

[6] **The Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Hutt):** Thank you, Chair. It has been important that I prioritised my budget setting this year, particularly focusing on the One Wales Government commitments. If you focus on the written evidence that I presented to the Committee, I have tried to prioritise my spend under the children and young people and school effectiveness group. Clearly, I have had to look for every possible opportunity to lever in efficiencies in terms of my budget. We have also

brought forward capital from 2010-11 into 2008-09, in order for us to help with the response to the recession and to ensure that this investment which was carried forward could have an impact on school building and on support for the construction industry.

[7] We have, of course, had to reduce the capital budget as a result of fiscal expectations from the UK Government. I have had to flatline some budgets but I have reprioritised my budgets, very much in line with the key policy areas with which this committee is concerned.

[8] **Helen Mary Jones:** Could you explain the process that comes into place to enable you, as Minister for children—and the Cabinet sub-committee on children—to influence decisions about spending within other Ministers' budgets? I am thinking about social services budgets for looked-after children, and other areas.

[9] **Jane Hutt:** The Cabinet sub-committee—which I have been chairing for a number of years since its inception, when I was formerly Minister for Health and Social Services—has provided me with the opportunity to make an impact on the key areas of influence for children and young people: policy development, resource allocation and the development of legislation to underpin policy development.

[10] We are doing work in relation to children's budgeting, something I referred to in my letter to you on 12 October, on enabling us to understand the resources that we are already spending on children to inform policy development. I think that the children's budgeting research and data collection to which I refer—the statistical analysis of children's budget across the Welsh Assembly Government—has been pioneering. Wales is the first country in the UK to do this, and it is well regarded across Europe in terms of the opportunities that we have taken within children's budgeting. It is all linked to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the expectations for our action plan.

[11] The key point, in terms of the influence that I have had in chairing that sub-committee, is the ability to steer the prioritisation of our policies across the Welsh Assembly Government. I know that you are particularly interested in childcare and tackling child poverty. Those are areas in which I can demonstrate the influence of a cross-Government and cross-ministerial committee, which is something that you shadow, in many senses, as a scrutiny vehicle. This has resulted in our being able to bring out priorities; the importance of continuing to invest in Flying Start, for example. If you look at the budget, which rises from £32 million to £39 million in 2010 and 2011, that demonstrates the influence and impact of having a budget where the priorities have been accepted and addressed by the children and young people's cabinet sub-committee.

[12] There are also other aspects of childcare. Clearly, Flying Start helps us to deliver, in particular, the 'One Wales' commitment to free childcare for two-year-olds. Also, in terms of the wider childcare strategy, there is £4.4 million that we are putting into after-school childcare, via the community focused schools provision, and there is an uplift of £1 million for 2010-11. As I said in my letter, there is the money that we are putting in to Want to Work and Genesis Cymru Wales. We are now refocusing our childcare strategy to take into account the impact of recession and the welfare reform agenda.

[13] However, resources are only part of it. I have taken plans and programmes to the committee for school counselling and the community—particularly for issues around the Disabled Children Matter Wales campaign, which I am co-ordinating—and this has all delivered a focus on those issues. In terms of tackling child poverty, I would say again that—going back to the children's budgeting process—what has been valuable is that we can focus on resources that are now engaged in tackling child poverty.

[14] **Helen Mary Jones:** Thank you, Minister. Some of the points that you may want to

raise may come up in other Members' questions. I am aware of everybody's time constraints—the Minister's and ours—so, as far as possible, and I realise that these matters are complex, can we all give focused questions and answers, including the Minister? The Minister touched on childcare, Angela; I think that that is where you wanted to take us next.

[15] **Angela Burns:** Minister, is it not true to say that what has happened in this budget is that you have merely shifted funds from one pot to another? You have talked about the increase in Flying Start. However, there has been a large decrease of over £7 million in Cymorth, which includes childcare. I wonder how this budget will enable you to meet the commitment in the 'One Wales Delivery Plan for 2009-10' that talks about providing universal childcare and extending free full-time high-quality childcare for two-year-olds in the greatest need. I posit that this is just a shifting around of money and that it will not bring an additional benefit.

[16] **Jane Hutt:** You will recognise, I am sure, that the budget for Cymorth is over £45 million—it is £45.748 million. Over the last eight to 10 years, since the inception of Cymorth, we have increased the funding year by year. Indeed, the transfer of £7 million from Cymorth's allocation to Flying Start is entirely in line with the theme of Cymorth, which is about family support, ensuring that families have access to that, and that Flying Start can be supported adequately to meet the catchment areas that we have identified. It is a substantial budget for Cymorth that is already delivering in terms of the main themes of that programme.

[17] **Helen Mary Jones:** As we are so short of time, I ask Members to go through the questions that we have. If you could make a note of supplementary questions, and if we have time at the end, we will put them to the Minister. If not, we will put them in writing in our response.

[18] **Angela Burns:** It was not a question. I was going to ask you if it was possible to have a note of the number of childcare places currently being provided and what the budget would be able to provide next year.

[19] **Helen Mary Jones:** I am very happy to put that to the Minister in our response to the draft budget.

[20] **Eleanor Burnham:** My question was about the fact that there are people who are on the edge who do not fall into the criteria of Flying Start. Please could you add that to the list?

[21] **Helen Mary Jones:** By all means.

[22] **Eleanor Burnham:** A ydych yn credu bod y cyflwyniad ynglŷn â faint o arian sy'n cael ei wario ar blant a phobl ifanc ar draws y Llywodraeth yn caniatáu dadansoddi tryloyw a gwaith craffu effeithiol ar wariant ar blant a phobl ifanc ar draws Cymru? **Eleanor Burnham:** Do you believe that the presentation of spending on children and young people, across Government, allows the transparent analysis and effective scrutiny of spending on children and young people in Wales?

[23] **Jane Hutt:** Thank you, Eleanor. This goes back to the Chair's opening question on how we can demonstrate, particularly through the children and young people's cabinet sub-committee, the transparency and prioritisation. It is inevitably about priorities, to go back to Angela's point. The children's budgeting mechanism, which we are pioneering, helps us to be transparent and open about that investment.

12:10 pm

[24] I would like to comment on the children's budgeting focus. In terms of child poverty

spending, back in 2006 we looked at the proportion of Welsh Assembly Government budget spent on children, and in 2009 we published a statistical article to demonstrate how much we were spending on children across the board. It was estimated at 28 per cent of expenditure, which is £4.4 billion based on those plans for 2010-11. It is crucial to identify that there will be £89 million over three years for Flying Start, £43.6 million over the next six years for Want to Work and £68.5 million on Genesis Cymru Wales. It is good to put this in the public domain. There is £148 million over the next three years for Cymorth, to go back to Angela's point. We are taking other measures, such as stimulating the take-up of benefit for families with disabled children.

[25] **Christine Chapman:** I would like to put to you what Save the Children said about children's budgeting. Although some progress had been made in Wales, it has been slow. Do you think that the introduction of a new planning and reporting system, which has resulted in the Government's budgets being restructured, has been a missed opportunity to take forward its commitment to children's budgeting?

[26] **Jane Hutt:** I do not think so. In fact, I think that it perhaps provides an opportunity. Perhaps Lynne can comment, as she is the one who wrestles with the new arrangements.

[27] **Ms Hamilton:** I hope that the information that we have provided helps you to understand which previous budgets have been translated into the new structure. Our objectives in applying the new structure have been to provide and apply more transparent ministerial and senior official accountability for particular spending programmes, so that it is more apparent who is accountable for what delivery programme. I take your point that that does not go as far as enabling a full view of the whole of the Government's spending on children and young people.

[28] The work that we are responsible for is focused on our Minister's accountability for these budgets and David's additional accounting officer responsibilities. We endeavour to look across the patch, but this piece of work is, of necessity, confined to the budgets that we are primarily responsible for.

[29] **Jane Hutt:** Perhaps I could say that the Minister for Finance and Public Service Delivery and his officials are engaged in this task and, if we get this right, it can be available as a mechanism for the whole Welsh Assembly Government.

[30] **Ms Hamilton:** If we have organised our information, as has been presented, it is easier for the finance department to then take that and aggregate it with the programmes of other Ministers, as the Minister points out.

[31] **Christine Chapman:** I now move on to the issue of child poverty, which we have already touched upon. I have a series of questions. Are you confident, Minister, that there is sufficient relevant funding across all main expenditure groups to make progress on the 'One Wales' commitment on child poverty?

[32] **Jane Hutt:** The point that I made earlier, about what we can do in terms of influence and resources, is a key policy development, but it has to be underpinned by legislation. The Proposed Children and Families (Wales) Measure is crucial in ensuring that the spend and the programmes that we are delivering, in partnership with local government, such as Flying Start, and through Cymorth, are taken forward and sustained as a result of a statutory obligation, on local authorities, in this instance, to demonstrate how they are tackling child poverty. The fact that we have incorporated the commitment to free childcare for two-year-olds within that proposed Measure is important to ensure that we can sustain it in that way. I do not want to repeat the figures that I have just given, because that is on the record, but the fact that I have sought to safeguard, in my budget, those areas under my responsibility that are

key to tackling child poverty, is crucial.

[33] I would also say, however, in terms of the letter that I wrote to you on 12 October, that I do also come to other portfolio ministerial responsibility. On page 3 of my letter, I refer to the spend, for example, of £2.5 million by the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government to deliver the Child Trust Fund Cymru commitment and also the substance misuse action fund, improving services for children and young people, with a focus on psycho-social interventions, and the £500,000 that the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government is putting into the take-up campaign for disabled children and their families. As I am co-ordinating work in my ministerial role, I have also sought to extract and demonstrate clearly other ministerial portfolio commitments to tackling child poverty.

[34] Let me say, finally, that the work that we are doing as a department in tackling economic inactivity and unemployment, tackling the impact of the recession, is crucial to tackling child poverty. Workless households are the poorest households. There are more workless lone parents who are, therefore, in the position of experiencing poverty for their children and their families, so all the work that we are doing to tackle youth unemployment, all the counter-recessionary investment, the £20.5 million that I have levered in to tackle youth unemployment and to protect businesses, through ProAct, and to reskill, through ReAct and SkillBuild, these are all part of tackling child poverty.

[35] **Christine Chapman:** You have already mentioned the Proposed Children and Families (Wales) Measure, but are you content that your draft budget would address the financial implications regarding child poverty within the proposed Measure? You have already mentioned some, but do you have any further comments on that?

[36] **Jane Hutt:** The investment in Flying Start, and the commitment to safeguard it, is a demonstration that we want to make that proposed Measure work.

[37] **Helen Mary Jones:** Thank you, Minister. I also thank Irene James for making time to join us as a substitute for Lynne Neagle. This is a very busy time of day for all Assembly Members, so we particularly appreciate your making time to be here—it is obviously important that we have a full complement when we are scrutinising the Minister on something so important. Thank you and may I bring you in on question 7?

12.20 p.m.

[38] **Irene James:** Thank you, Chair. Minister, in your evidence, you outline that the draft budget includes funding for promoting inclusion. We do see disadvantage in tackling poverty of educational opportunity. Can you provide specific further detail?

[39] **Jane Hutt:** There are a number of facets in my department, some of which I have already mentioned, which address that question. The pre-school curriculum, with Flying Start, which we have spent a lot of time on already, is vital to ensure that children do not start at a disadvantage. Those children who are targeted, who are at risk of disadvantage, or are experiencing disadvantage, they have a flying start at pre-school, starting with the foundation phase, which is universal, of course, with the 1:8 adult:pupil ratio for three to five-year-olds and 1:15 for five to seven-year-olds. I have safeguarded and continued the investment with an extra £76 million for the foundation phase and, going to local authorities, £22 million for the uplift for next year, through to the 14-19 learning pathways to tackle poverty of educational opportunity, to open up parity of esteem for vocational as well as academic routes and the inclusive approach in the Welsh baccalaureate. There is also the provision of learning coaches, for example, particularly in the 14 to 19 learning pathways, and the investment that we have made in tackling disaffection with the attending and behaving action plan. I also have to mention—I am sure that someone will raise the point—that school counselling is also

a route to enabling our young people to take full advantage of educational opportunities by providing a direct service to young people who may be facing troubles, difficulties, stresses and pressures in their lives.

[40] We also have an action plan to support young people who are not in employment, education or training, and the funding that I have put into Reach the Heights, which will help around 30,000 young people improve their career opportunities, targeting 11 to 19-year-olds across west Wales and the Valleys to prevent them becoming NEET.

[41] **Helen Mary Jones:** Thank you, Minister. To take you into a slightly different area, Eleanor Burnham.

[42] **Eleanor Burnham:** Mewn perthynas â'ch tystiolaeth ynglŷn â phlant a phobl ifanc ag anabled, nid oedd diweddariad ynglŷn â'ch ymrwymiad, ond yr wyf yn deall ein bod wedi derbyn rhywbeth ychwanegol. Ar y sail honno, yn eich tystiolaeth ychwanegol yr ydych wedi amlinellu nifer o fentrau a ariennir gan y Llywodraeth i wella gwasanaethau ar gyfer plant ag anghenion dysgu ychwanegol a phlant anabl. A allwch amlinellu sut yr asesir yn effeithiol yr arian hwn yn nhermau'r amrywiaeth eang o wasanaethau sy'n berthnasol i blant a phobl ifanc anabl? Weithiau, wrth siarad ag etholwyr, yr ydym yn clywed am gymaint o wahanol wasanaethau, mae hynny'n gymhlethdod ynddo'i hun, felly byddai eglurhad yn beth da.

Eleanor Burnham: As regards your evidence on disabled children and young people, there was no update on your commitment, but I now understand that we have been given some additional papers. On that basis, in your additional evidence you have outlined a number of Government-funded initiatives to improve services for children with additional learning needs and for disabled children. Can you outline how you will assess effectively the use of this funding in terms of the wide diversity of services for disabled children and young people? When we are out talking to our electors, we sometimes hear that there are so many different ones that it is a complexity in itself, so some clarification would be good.

[43] **Jane Hutt:** As well as the response that I gave in my letter of 12 October, which I appreciate is within the last week, I have given quite a lot of information on provision for disabled children within my department, particularly the extra £4 million that we are putting into the Unlocking the Potential special school project, and the £500,000 for three years to develop the role of transition workers in Wales for young people with a disability. I want to mention—it is in the letter—that a few weeks ago, I launched a £2.2 million investment in early support materials. This was very well received and I acknowledged at the launch conference that this had come particularly as a result of the Disabled Children Matter Wales campaign.

[44] I also draw your attention to the written statement that I made on 16 July, which was a progress update across all ministerial portfolios on the policy agenda for disabled children and young people. We are guided by this policy agenda to transform the lives of disabled children and young people. So it is about bringing it all together. I mentioned Brian Gibbons's benefit take-up campaign, £1.5 million for short breaks, which comes under the Minister for Health and Social Services' remit, as does the report due on wheelchair provision. All of this brings together the co-ordinated spend on disabled children, but I have to say that this is a key priority for me, as Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, because we know that, at every policy level—we could talk about the fact that I am focusing on play for disabled children in the Cymorth grant—we have to do more to address the needs of disabled children and young people.

[45] **Eleanor Burnham:** When you are budgeting, though, it is always interesting for us, looking in, how you balance the need and demand. There are initiatives here, there is a pot of

money—you mentioned £2.2 million, another £4 million, and £1.5 million—and it is quite difficult to get a handle on what is happening. Your opponents would accuse you of piecemeal initiatives that are confusing and, very often, do not even appear to be sustainable.

[46] **Jane Hutt:** I shall bring the director in, because he is a civil servant, not a politician.

[47] **Mr Hawker:** Thank you, Minister. I have recently taken over chairing the task group with the Disabled Children Matter Wales campaign, and one of the purposes of that is to make sure that we are getting good intelligence on the effectiveness of the spend across all areas of work. It is quite right that we need better information, better data about what the needs are, so that our policy and our spend are evidence-driven. We know that there will always be people asking for more and, to a certain extent, we have to judge requests against one another, but the purpose of working with the campaign is that we have a joint approach to this, that we are working with all our partners in the voluntary sector and in local government so that we can get a much more strategic way of identifying the needs and targeting the resources to those needs in the fairest way possible.

[48] **Helen Mary Jones:** Taking you to a specific part of the health portfolio, Minister, in 2009-10 the mental health allocations for the NHS did not identify separate, ring-fenced money for children and adolescents. There was ring-fenced money for mental health, but nothing specifically ring-fenced for children and adolescents. In the 2010-11 allocations, will there be ring fencing for funding for children and adolescent services separate from the adult mental health funding, or is it all one mental health pot?

[49] **Jane Hutt:** Again, I am engaging with fellow Ministers, including the Minister for Health and Social Services, Edwina Hart, on how their budgets are developing and emerging. You will know from my letter of 12 October that I reported an indicative budget for children and adolescent mental health services of £2.184 million and that that is underpinned by the evidence given about standards and expectations by the national service framework for children, young people and maternity services and, indeed, the review of CAMHS services that was undertaken.

12.30 p.m.

[50] In terms of clarifying how this is going to be ring-fenced or safeguarded for CAMHS, I would imagine that that would be through the health strategic framework for priority spend process. This would, however, require me to return in writing to you, possibly via the Minister for health.

[51] **Helen Mary Jones:** We would be grateful if you could do that, Minister, because, while one would broadly welcome the mental health budget being ring fenced, because we know it has been difficult to protect that work, we are concerned about the ongoing concern of the Children's Commissioner for Wales about the difficulties with services for children and adolescents. So if you could raise that with the Minister for health and get back to us in writing we would be very grateful.

[52] **Jane Hutt:** When we talk about CAMHS, the strategy was 'Everybody's Business'. It has a number of tiers, starting at tier one in terms of preventative interventions, of which much of the investment for my budget in terms of the Incredible Years parenting programme is vital to the delivery. It is preventative as well as being further up the ladder in terms of the tiers and intervention that may be needed. Our schools counselling service, which is now taking off and in which we are now investing more money, is also important to the delivery of the CAMHS strategy. We must see the CAMHS strategy having cross-departmental, cross-portfolio engagement. I believe that much of the work that is going on in schools now in terms of nurturing and developing emotional resilience, as I am sure that you have noticed

when you have visited schools, is having a huge impact as a preventative measure. We now have a duty of wellbeing in our schools that is very much about addressing the CAMHS strategy.

[53] **Helen Mary Jones:** That leads us neatly on to your next question, Irene.

[54] **Irene James:** It does, Chair. Minister, you have mentioned the counselling service, but do you think the additional £1.5 million allocated in the support for learners budget is sufficient to deliver the stated objective of DCELLS to provide a counselling service available to all children and young people?

[55] **Jane Hutt:** The budget will now be £4.5 million for the school counselling service. One thing that I wanted to mention today to the committee—I am just issuing a press statement on this—is that Wales has won a prestigious award for our ground-breaking school counselling service from the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. That is very good news. The school-based counselling strategy is about independent, safe and confidential school-based counselling for children and young people. My statement says that it is the aim that, by 2011, every secondary school will have high-standard counselling services available to all pupils so that they have someone to turn to if they need help or support. That is the answer to your question. It was a £6.5 million, three-year counselling strategy that we announced as part of the ‘One Wales’ commitment. The money that we are putting in this year, for 2010-11, will then lead to this reach for every secondary school. We are also piloting with primary schools their opportunities to intervene at an earlier stage. Hopefully the committee will take an interest in how this is developing.

[56] **Helen Mary Jones:** I am sure that we will, Minister. Thank you. Taking us now to an area in which the committee has already taken considerable interest: Eleanor Burnham.

[57] **Eleanor Burnham:** Mewn perthynas â chyllid ar gyfer rhieni a rhianta, a allwch ddweud, Weinidog, sut mae'r gyllideb ddrafft yn adlewyrchu'r argymhellion a wnaed gan y pwyllgor hwn yn ein hymchwiliad i rianta? **Eleanor Burnham:** In relation to funding for parents and parenting, could you tell us, Minister, how the draft budget reflects the recommendations made by this committee in its parenting inquiry?

[58] **Jane Hutt:** The debate last week was very valuable. We received your report on the parenting action plan and the way forward. This takes us back to many of the things that I have already mentioned. Flying Start has a key role to play in terms of the delivery of parenting programmes and I have committed the Government to developing a parenting strategy based on moving forward the parenting action plan. In the budgetary allocation for Cymorth and parenting, family support is a key theme. In 2008-09, children and young people's partnerships gave over £70 million of their allocations to the theme of family support. We are also putting in £100,000 into the evaluation of the Incredible Years programme. So the allocation through Cymorth is crucial in terms of the support for parenting programmes.

[59] If you look at Flying Start again, back to accounting for the £27 million revenue grant that we gave to local children's and young people's partnerships in 2008-09, £1.7 million of that was budgeted to meet the delivery of parenting programmes under Flying Start. There is also the fact that we are—we touched on this last week in my report—funding the booklets ‘Raising Children Confidently’ and the ‘Help at Hand Toolkit’. There is all the work that we are trying to do in terms of funding and support for that and also, as I said, parenting grants for local authorities.

12.30 p.m.

[60] **Helen Mary Jones:** Thank you, Minister. You would of course expect us to want to question you about the national advocacy project and the funding for that. In the additional evidence you provided to the committee—we have already expressed our appreciation for that—you outlined that the draft 2009 budget for the advocacy unit is £850,000, if I have got that right, which is an increase of £500,000 on the current year. Within the context of this increase, can you outline what progress you expect the unit to achieve in 2010-11 towards delivering the aims of the national advocacy project?

[61] **Jane Hutt:** I have touched on this again in response to your letter. To identify more specifically what this means, the extra money that we are putting into the advocacy project will not only enable us to fund the national advocacy unit but also the helpline that we are setting up. It will facilitate the national independent advocacy board, which, as you know, includes young people, as well as other public appointments, advocacy training and registration as well as publicity and promotion.

[62] **Angela Burns:** I have a few questions. My first is on equality of opportunity. I am slightly concerned to note that the inclusion grant has been reduced by £300,000, down to £1 million. For the record, this is to provide for inclusion of children of refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, Gypsies and Travellers. Do you think this £1 million is effective? Will it be enough to spread throughout Wales, given that it is such a small sum, in order to achieve that, or do you think that it would be better if it was rolled into Flying Start, as this covers most of the areas in which children of these particular groups would be?

[63] **Jane Hutt:** I will bring Lynne in here to address the £1 million inclusion issue, but I want to say that, in terms of education of refugees and asylum-seeker children, the minority ethnic achievement grant is crucial. It has increased substantially over recent years—over 20 per cent between 2007-08 and 2009-10. We are also bidding for European structural funds convergence funding for the minority ethnic achievement grant match funding and we are hoping to have an additional £3.5 million into the service as a result of that application. Lynne, do you have a comment on the £1 million?

[64] **Ms Hamilton:** I think that your question is really about whether it is effective potentially on its own or whether it would be better bundled in with Flying Start.

[65] **Angela Burns:** Or with any other programme.

[66] **Ms Hamilton:** Rather than the policy specifics, on which I cannot speak particularly—I could write to you if that would be helpful—but on the broader issue of grants, one of the activities that we are looking at on behalf of the Minister is how we strategically review our specific grants and if it would be better to look at bigger bundlings of grants to take a much more strategic view, associating it directly with the school effectiveness framework, so that we take a holistic view rather than, as one of your colleagues said earlier, small packets of initiatives. I do not have the policy expertise to talk about the inclusion grant, specifically, but we could write to you. In terms of the effectiveness of the smaller packets of grants, however, we are looking at taking a more holistic and strategic view to targeting our grant funding, both to enable the providers and recipients of the grants to make appropriate local decisions but also to endeavour to reduce the bureaucratic burden on the grant recipients and indeed on ourselves.

[67] **Angela Burns:** You will know from the work that we have done on the specific education grants that that is music to my ears, because we can save an enormous amount of money and redeploy it to the front line, where it is really required.

[68] My second question is on the efficiency of savings that you talk about, a sum of £600 million. Of that £600 million, how confident are you that they are true efficiency savings

rather than simply the retraction of underspends because policies have not been able to be carried through due to either timeframe, lack of staff or trying to get so many projects off the ground? How much of the efficiency savings will be from where budgets were given too much headroom and how much are true efficiency savings?

[69] **Jane Hutt:** Lynne is responsible for this from a departmental perspective, but I pay tribute to my civil servants for their budget planning assumptions. It is not just this year; we had a very tough budget last year as well. I am not sure what the latest spend is but it is pretty much 99 per cent. The room for manoeuvre, therefore, has become less and less over the last two and a half years in terms of identifying underspend. If there is a programme which, for some reason, does not take off when it is planned then you have an opportunity to reallocate and vire moneys, but it is much tighter in terms of planning assumptions and planning programmes. In terms of efficiencies, we have looked to our own delivery. We have taken money off promotion and publicity budgets. I have said that everything must go that we can do without. It has to go to the front line. The efficiencies, therefore, have been squeezed out of the system as a result of that exercise.

[70] What I have said as Minister is that we need to have a sustainable approach to our budget, so that efficiencies have to be ingrained into our planning processes. It goes back to your previous point, Angela, about how we can start being more strategic, rationalising the amount of special grants. If you do that, however, you have got to know what you expect of local authorities in terms of the outcomes. So, that goes back to outcomes agreements. One thing that we have not mentioned this afternoon is the fact that we are giving a lot of our funding for local authorities, which has been in special grants, to the school effectiveness framework. It is that framework that will deal with the issues that Irene raised earlier on about educational effectiveness, tackling inequality and making sure that we do not have inconsistency across Wales in terms of the way in which our education funding is spent. Yes, of course there are formula allocations in terms of tackling deprivation, not only through Flying Start but through other targetted initiatives that we can focus in that way, but I do believe that the approach is now rigorous in terms of efficiencies and it is looking to the long term in terms of sustaining our budgets.

[71] **Helen Mary Jones:** Thank you, Minister.

<p>[72] Diolch i'r Aelodau am fod mor ddisgybledig, sy'n golygu ein bod yn dod â'r rhan hon o'r cyfarfod i ben ar amser. Diolch i'r Gweinidog a'i staff am fod yn bresennol. Byddwn, wrth gwrs, yn adrodd yn ôl ar y drafodaeth ac ar unrhyw gonsŷrn sydd gennym ynglŷn â'r cyllid. Diolch, Weinidog, am fod mor agored, fel arfer. Yr ydym i gyd yn gwybod ein bod yn wynebu amser caletach ar ôl y gyllideb hon; os yw hon yn broblematic, bydd y flwyddyn nesaf yn waeth. Yr ydym yn gwerthfawrogi'r ffaith eich bod wedi bod mor agored gyda ni.</p>	<p>I thank Members for being so disciplined, which means that we can bring this part of the meeting to a close on time. Thank you to the Minister and her staff for attending. We will, of course, report back on this discussion and on any concerns that we may still have about the budget. Thank you, Minister, for being so open, as you always are. We all know that we face a much harder time after this budget; if this one was problematic it is going to be even harder next year. We appreciate the fact that you have been so open with us.</p>
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12.46 p.m.

Cynnig Trefniadol Procedural Motion

[73] **Helen Mary Jones:** Cynigiad fod **Helen Mary Jones:** I move that

y pwyllgor yn penderfynu gwahardd y cyhoedd o weddill y cyfarfod yn unol â Rheol Sefydlog Rhif 10.37(vi). *the committee resolves to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with Standing Order No. 10.37(vi).*

[74] Gwelaf fod y pwyllgor yn gytûn. I see that the committee is in agreement.

Derbyniwyd y cynnig.
Motion agreed.

Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 12.46 p.m.
The public part of the meeting ended at 12.46 p.m.