

Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc

Lleoliad:
Ystafell Bwyllgora 1 – y Senedd

Dyddiad:
Dydd Iau, 19 Gorffennaf 2012

Amser:
09:00

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



I gael rhagor o wybodaeth, cysylltwch â:

Polisi: Claire Morris
Clerc y Pwyllgor
029 2089 8148 / 029 2089 8032
PwyllgorPPI@cymru.gov.uk

Agenda

- 1. Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 i benderfynu gwahardd y cyhoedd o'r cyfarfod ar gyfer eitemau 2 a 3: (9.15)**
- 2. Trafod y Flaenraglen Waith (9.15 – 9.45)**
- 3. Y Dull o Graffu ar Gyllideb Ddrafft 2013–14 (9.45 – 10.00)**
- 4. Cyflwyniad, ymddiheuriadau a dirprwyon**
- 5. Sesiwn Graffu gyda'r Dirprwy Weinidog Plant a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol ar yr Ymchwiliad i Fabwysiadu (10.00 – 11.00)**
(Tudalennau 1 – 8)
Gwenda Thomas, Y Dirprwy Weinidog Plant a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Julie Rogers, Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Plant
Debra Jenkins, Pennaeth y Tîm Plant sy'n Agored i Niwed
(Egwyl– 11.00 – 11.05)
- 6. Bil Safonau a Threfniadaeth Ysgolion (Cymru): Cyfnod 1 – Sesiwn dystiolaeth 6 (11.05 – 12.30)**
Leighton Andrews AC, Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
- 7. Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 i benderfynu gwahardd y**

cyhoedd o weddill y cyfarfod (12.30)

8. Bil Safonau a Threfniadaeth Ysgolion (Cymru): Cyfnod 1 – Ystyried y materion allweddol (12.30 – 1.15)

9. Papurau i'w nodi

Bil Safonau a Threfniadaeth Ysgolion (Cymru): Cyfnod 1 – Crynodeb o'r materion a godwyd gan y grwpiau ffocws (Tudalennau 9 – 22)

Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc: Ymchwiliad i Wasanaethau Mabwysiadu yng Nghymru

Diben

Mae'r papur hwn yn rhoi'r diweddaraf am wasanaethau mabwysiadu yng Nghymru ac am ddyhead Llywodraeth Cymru i sefydlu Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol, ac i ddarparu gwybodaeth ar gyfer Ymchwiliad y Pwyllgor i fabwysiadu. Rydym yn ymchwilio i gylch gwaith a swyddogaethau Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol, ac yn cydweithio â llywodraeth leol a'r trydydd sector i ddatblygu model Cymru gyfan.

Cyflwyniad

1. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn glynu'n gadarn wrth yr egwyddor sy'n sylfaen i Ddeddf Plant 1989 mai'r peth gorau, lle bo modd, yw i blant gael gofal gan eu teuluoedd neu eu teuluoedd estynedig. Sut bynnag, i sicrhau gwell canlyniadau i blant a phobl ifanc, cydnabyddwn mai byw oddi cartref yw'r ateb gorau i rai plant.
2. Yn Chwefror 2011, cyhoeddwyd *Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cynaliadwy i Gymru: Fframwaith Gweithredu*. Roedd yn nodi'n glir y gellid cyflenwi rhai gwasanaethau yn fwy effeithiol yn genedlaethol, ac roeddem am ddatblygu hyn drwy weithio gyda rhanddeiliaid i ymchwilio i gylch gwaith a swyddogaethau Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol. Rydym am i awdurdodau lleol weithredu'n gynt i ddod o hyd i gartrefi parhaol i blant na fyddai'n llesol iddynt ddychwelyd adref, ac i wella'r ffordd yr hyrwyddir mabwysiadu i gynyddu'r gronfa o fabwysiadwyr.
3. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn cydnabod bod mynd ati'n dda i gynllunio a chomisiynu lleoliadau o ansawdd yn hanfodol i sicrhau gwell canlyniadau i'n plant a'n pobl ifanc sy'n derbyn gofal. Gall ystod o leoliadau o ansawdd wneud hyn, drwy nodi anghenion plant a phobl ifanc, tra'n sicrhau bod eu bywydau'n parhau i gael eu diogelu gan drefniadau priodol. Mae dros dri chwarter o'r plant sy'n derbyn gofal mewn lleoliadau maethu, trefniant dros dro ydyw i rai, ond i nifer o blant, yn enwedig plant hyn sydd â chysylltiad â'u rhieni biolegol, gofal maeth hirdymor yw'r opsiwn parhaol gorau o ran gofal; cyflwynwyd Gwarchodaethau Arbennig yn 2005 i roi i ofalwyr maeth, perthynas neu gyfaill teuluol gyfrifoldeb rhiant am blentyn heb dorri'r cysylltiad â'i rieni biolegol; plant yn eu harddegau yn y system (37% rhwng 13 a 18 oed) y mae gan lawer ohonynt anghenion uwch sy'n gofyn gofal arbenigol. I'r bobl ifanc hyn mae'n bosibl mai lleoliad preswyl fyddai orau am fod modd iddynt gael gofal gan weithwyr proffesiynol sydd â'r sgiliau a'r profiadau i'w hannog i gyrraedd eu holl botensial.

Y sefyllfa bresennol

4. Mae mabwysiadu yn broses gymhleth ac mae angen cryn wybodaeth a dealltwriaeth o anghenion plant a'r problemau amrywiol sy'n eu hwynebu. Bydd y gweithwyr cymdeithasol sy'n cynllunio ac yn trefnu ac yn paratoi plentyn a'i deulu biolegol ar gyfer mabwysiadu yn ymgymryd â thasg helaeth, yn aml yn erbyn cefndir o achosion gofal anodd a chynhennus sy'n gorfodi eu hamserlenni eu hunain ac yn mynnu bod adroddiadau a chynlluniau gofal

Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc: Ymchwiliad i Wasanaethau Mabwysiadu yng Nghymru

cymhleth yn cael eu llunio.

5. Yn y gorffennol, oherwydd rhaniad daearyddol yr awdurdodau lleol, roedd llond llaw o asiantaethau bach iawn yn delio ag ardaloedd gwledig eang ac ni fyddent yn lleoli mwy na dyrnaid o blant bob blwyddyn nac yn recriwtio mwy na nifer fach o ddarpar fabwysiadwyr. Mae'r asiantaethau hyn wedi gweld drostynt eu hunain fantais cydweithio â'i gilydd i ddarparu gwasanaeth mabwysiadu mwy hyfedr a chost-effeithiol.

Plant mewn Gofal

6. Mae angen teulu sefydlog a chariadlon ar blant ac weithiau ni all rhieni biolegol ofalu am eu plant eu hunain. Ar 31 Mawrth 2011, roedd 5,419 o Blant sy'n Derbyn Gofal yng Nghymru, a 3,635 ohonynt yn destun Gorchymyn Gofal, ar ôl i awdurdodau lleol fodloni'r llys teulu mai'r peth gorau i'r plant hyn fyddai eu rhoi dan ofal. Mae'r categori hwn o blant mewn gofal yn annhebygol o ddychwelyd at eu teulu biolegol, felly, sicrhau'r gofal gorau posibl ar eu cyfer yw un o gyfrifoldebau pwysicaf y wladwriaeth.
7. Dros y 5 mlynedd diwethaf, roedd y rhan fwyaf o'r plant a fabwysiadwyd rhwng 1 a 4 blwydd oed. Mae nifer y plant sy'n aros 2-3 blynedd cyn cael eu mabwysiadu wedi codi 46% o 65 yn 2006 i 95 yn 2011. Yn 2011, er bod yr amser cyfartalog rhwng dechrau derbyn gofal a mabwysiadu wedi lleihau o 954 diwrnod (tua 2 flynedd a 7 mis) i 905 diwrnod (tua 2 flynedd a 5 mis), mae'r Llywodraeth yn cydnabod yr oedi yn y system fabwysiadu ac yn dal i boeni am hynny ac am y niwed parhaol y gall hyn ei achosi i blant agored i niwed, drwy ddwyn oddi arnynt eu cyfle gorau i gael cariad a sefydlogrwydd mewn teulu newydd.
8. I Blant sy'n Derbyn Gofal gall mabwysiadu fod yn opsiwn cadarnhaol, yn enwedig i blant iau, ond hefyd i rai plant hŷn. Bydd mabwysiadu yn rhoi i blant agored i niwed, gan gynnwys nifer ag anghenion cymhleth a hanes o gael eu cam-drin, y sefydlogrwydd mwyaf posibl mewn cartref parhaol gyda theulu parhaol.
9. Nid yw Llywodraeth Cymru yn hollol siŵr bod y system gyfredol bob amser yn gweithio er lles y plentyn. Er 31 Mawrth 2011, mae dros 2,000 o blant wedi bod mewn gofal am 3 blynedd neu fwy; yn y flwyddyn hyd at 31 Mawrth 2011 roedd 252 o fabwysiaidau, sef 4.7% o'r boblogaeth gyfan o Blant sy'n Derbyn Gofal – ac nid yw'r ystadegyn hwnnw'n creu darlun calonogol.

Darpar Fabwysiadwyr

10. Mae niferoedd y mabwysiadwyr cymeradwy wedi gostwng yn y 18 mis diwethaf. Mae Asiantaethau Mabwysiadu a'r Gofrestr Fabwysiadu wedi nodi'r taer angen i recriwtio, asesu a chymeradwyo mabwysiadwyr posibl, proses sy'n gallu cymryd rhwng 6 ac 8 mis i'w chwblhau. Yn amlwg, caiff y prinder hwn o fabwysiadwyr posibl effaith aruthrol ar y pariadau addas sydd ar gael i ddiwallu anghenion amrywiol y plant sy'n aros i gael eu mabwysiadu. Mae BAAF yn amcangyfrif na fydd 1 o bob 4 o'r plant sydd ar gael i'w mabwysiadu yn cael eu lleoli, yn bennaf oherwydd prinder rhieni mabwysiol.
11. Mae nifer o'r darpar fabwysiadwyr yn fodlon ar y gwasanaeth a gânt, ond mae rhai yn anfodlon. Er bod rhai darpar fabwysiadwyr yn cael sicrwydd a chymorth croesawgar yn ystod eu hymholiadau cychwynnol ynghylch mabwysiadu, profiad eraill yw fod asiantaethau mabwysiadu yn ymateb yn araf i ymholiadau cychwynnol. Mae tystiolaeth yn awgrymu bod darpar fabwysiadwyr mewn gwahanol rannau o'r wlad yn cael eu gwrthod neu'n gwneud cynnydd araf yn y broses asesu am nad ydynt yn diwallu anghenion penodol, cyfredol yr asiantaeth y maent wedi cyflwyno cais iddi, ac mae hynny'n dangos

Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc: Ymchwiliad i Wasanaethau Mabwysiadu yng Nghymru

bod yna ddiffyg cydgysylltu yn gyffredinol o ran cyflenwad a galw. Mae rhai darpar fabwysiadwyr yn teimlo bod y broses asesu yn cymryd llawer gormod o amser a llawer mwy na'r 8 mis a nodir yn y canllawiau statudol. Mae'r dystiolaeth a gyflwynwyd i'ch ymchwiliad ac a gasglwyd gan swyddogion Llywodraeth Cymru yn awgrymu bod darpar fabwysiadwyr yn teimlo bod y broses asesu yn canolbwyntio ar dicio blychau ac ysgrifennu adroddiadau hir, yn hytrach nag ar eu gallu i fagu plentyn. Os ydym i gynyddu'r nifer o ddarpar fabwysiadwyr, yn enwedig y rhai a all ddiwallu anghenion amrywiol ein plant sy'n derbyn gofal, yn arbennig plant hŷn, grwpiau sibling, a phlant ag anabledau, rhaid i asiantaethau mabwysiadu adolygu'r system gyfredol. Mae tystiolaeth hefyd yn awgrymu bod gwasanaethau ôl-fabwysiadu yn fylchog ledled Cymru; gall hyn fod yn ganlyniad i leoliad daeryddol yr asiantaethau neu i gyfyngiadau ariannol cyfredol.

12. Mae peth tystiolaeth yn awgrymu bod y broses baru a ddefnyddir ar hyn o bryd gan asiantaethau yn aneffeithiol. Wrth edrych ar y rhwystrau i baru, mae'r prif broblemau a nodwyd gan nifer o ffynonellau yn deillio o agweddau gweithiwr cymdeithasol y plentyn, sy'n dal i chwilio am y 'teulu delfrydol'¹; mae diffyg cyfathrebu rhwng gweithiwr cymdeithasol y plentyn a gweithiwr cymdeithasol y darpar fabwysiadwyr hefyd wedi peri i weithiwr cymdeithasol 'atal' pariadau posibl².

Ymatebion i'r Ymgynghoriad ar y Bil Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol (Cymru): Adran a Theitl: 6.1 – Mabwysiadu

13. Roedd y mwyafrif o'r holl ymatebwyr yn cefnogi'r cynigion polisi cyffredinol ar gyfer Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol. Roedd ymatebion yn awgrymu y byddai Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol:
 - yn amlygu ac yn lleihau anghysonderau mewn gwasanaethau mabwysiadu ledled Cymru; ac
 - yn galluogi gwasanaeth cyson a safonedig, i fynd i'r afael â'r gwasanaeth amrywiol sydd ar gael i blant a mabwysiadwyr, sy'n dibynnu ar hyn o bryd ar adnoddau a sgiliau awdurdodau lleol penodol.

Awgrymodd eraill fod hyn yn gyfle i adolygu darpariaethau mabwysiadu yng Nghymru, gan sicrhau na chaiff arferion da a chyflawniadau cyfredol eu glastwreiddio na'u hanwybyddu.

14. Ymgynghorwyd hefyd â phlant a phobl ifanc gan gynnwys plant sy'n derbyn gofal, gofalywyr ifanc a phlant anabl yn rhan o waith a gomisiynwyd. Roedd y plant a'r bobl ifanc yn cefnogi'r cynigion yn unfrydol ac roedd y plant sy'n derbyn gofal yn arbennig o gadarnhaol ynghylch y syniad o ddatblygu Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol.
15. Cydnabyddaf, fodd bynnag, fod Cymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru a Chymdeithas Cyfarwyddwyr y Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol wedi cynnig ffyrdd eraill o gynyddu effeithlonrwydd, er enghraifft drwy seilio'r trefniant cenedlaethol ar gydweithredu rhanbarthol, a byddwn yn ystyried manteision eu cynnig yn ofalus.

Cyfiawnder Teuluol

16. Nodwyd drwy'r Adolygiad Cyfiawnder Teuluol fod yr amser a gymerir gan y llysoedd i benderfynu rhoi gorchymyn gofal (interim neu lawn) i awdurdodau lleol yn destun pryder. Mae'r broses hon yn gyfrifoldeb i'r system cyfiawnder teuluol gyfan – sy'n cynnwys staff llys lleol, barnwyr, cyfreithwyr, awdurdodau lleol, gweithwyr iechyd proffesiynol a

¹ Farmer, E.; Dance, C.; Beecham, J.; Bonin, E. ac Ouwejan, D. (2010) *An investigation of family finding and matching in adoption – briefing paper*.

² BAAF, Gwneud y Defnydd Gorau o'r Gofrestr Fabwysiadu, Peilot, Ionawr 2011 hyd Ionawr 2012.

Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc: Ymchwiliad i Wasanaethau Mabwysiadu yng Nghymru

chyngorwyr arbenigol eraill, gan gynnwys y rheini o'r Gwasanaeth Cyngori a Chynorthwyo Llys i Blant a Theuluoedd (CAFCASS Cymru). Ond ar hyn o bryd, fel y cadarnhaodd yr Adolygiad Cyfiawnder Teuluol diweddar, mae hon yn broses sy'n cymryd llawer gormod o amser – cyfartaledd o 55 wythnos.

Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol

17. Nod Llywodraeth Cymru yw gweddnewid gwasanaethau mabwysiadu, i atal yr oedi a'r dyblygu diangen a gaiff effaith mor negyddol ar y canlyniadau i'n plant sy'n derbyn gofal. Dymunwn nodi'r agweddau ar y broses fabwysiadu a gyflawnir orau ar lefel genedlaethol, tra'n cydnabod bod yna swyddogaethau a ddylai barhau yn gyfrifoldeb i awdurdodau lleol unigol – newid heb niwed.
18. O dan ymbarél Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol, bydd Cymru'n datblygu model cenedlaethol a gaiff asiantaethau mabwysiadu yng Nghymru i gydweithio er mwyn gwella gwasanaethau mabwysiadu. Bydd pwerau newydd yn y Bil Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol (Cymru) yn galluogi Gweinidogion Cymru i'w gwneud yn ofynnol i'r holl awdurdodau lleol (asiantaethau mabwysiadu) ddod ynghyd i greu un Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol i gyflawni swyddogaethau mabwysiadu penodol. Ein syniad ar hyn o bryd yw y byddai'r Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol yn gyfrifol:
 - Am roi arweiniad Cenedlaethol a throsolygu gwasanaethau mabwysiadu (o ran Safonau, perfformiad a gwella);
 - Am fframwaith ar gyfer cymeradwyaethau mabwysiadu (gan gynnwys paneli);
 - Am sefydlu canolfan adnoddau, i roi porth i fabwysiadwyr posibl, yn darparu – gwybodaeth ar raglenni hyfforddi, gwybodaeth ar y broses asesu a llinell gyngor; ac
 - Am hyrwyddo mabwysiadu, os dyna sydd orau i'r plentyn, recriwtio darpar fabwysiadwyr a datblygu gweithlu arbenigol a hyfedr.
19. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn credu y bydd sefydlu Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol yn dwyn manteision mwy ac yn gyfle i grynhoi'r bobl arbenigol hyfedr hyn. Bydd hynny'n gwella effeithlonrwydd ac ansawdd y broses asesu, yn sicrhau tegwch yn y trefniadau ar gyfer mabwysiadu, ac yn annog cronni darpar fabwysiadwyr a chyflawni mwy effeithlon ac effeithiol drwy fwy o gydrafurio a chydweithredu ar draws ffiniau i harneisio natur arbenigol y gwasanaeth mabwysiadu.
20. Dylai sefydlu Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol helpu i ryddhau capasiti, gan alluogi gwasanaethau gofal plant awdurdodau lleol i ganolbwyntio mwy ar drefniadau lleoli ar gyfer y plentyn. Gall hyn gynnwys gwaith ynghylch paratoi a chynnal y cynllun mabwysiadu; a'r gwaith manwl a thrylwyr sy'n ofynnol gan y llysoedd ar gyfer adroddiadau ac asesiadau plant, wrth wneud cais am orchymyn lleoli/mabwysiadu. At hynny, byddant yn gallu canolbwyntio ar yr ochr cymorth ataliol i deuluoedd; gallai hyn gynnwys creu mwy o gyfleoedd i blant gael eu lleoli yn eu rhwydweithiau teuluol eu hunain a/neu gynnig ystod ehangach o wasanaethau gofal seibiant sy'n helpu plant a phobl ifanc i aros gyda'u teulu biolegol. Bydd trefniadau o'r fath, mewn nifer o amgylchiadau, yn gwella'r canlyniadau i blant ac yn gost-effeithiol yn ariannol.
21. Daeth yr adroddiad 'Adenillion Cymdeithasol ar Fuddsoddiad' (2011)³ i'r casgliad y gallai pob mabwysiad llwyddiannus o'r system ofal, lle caiff plentyn drwy fabwysiadu y cymorth sydd ei angen i ddatrys problemau o'i offennol, arwain at adenillion cymdeithasol o dros £1 miliwn fesul lleoliad.

³ PACT, Mabwysiadu a Maethu Domestig: Gwerthuso SROI. Cyflawnwyd y gwerthusiad gan Baker Tilly ac Ysgol Fusnes Cass (Ebrill 2011)

Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc: Ymchwiliad i Wasanaethau Mabwysiadu yng Nghymru

22. Bydd sefydlu Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol yn rhoi porth i fabwysiadwyr posibl; gallai hyn gynnwys darparu gwybodaeth ar raglenni hyfforddi a phrosesau asesu, a llinell cyngor cyffredinol. Y bwriad yw rhoi cyngor cyson i ddarpar fabwysiadwyr, gan sicrhau bod adnoddau ar gael i symud ceisiadau yn eu blaen ac nad yw cod post rhywun yn ffactor a all gyfyngu'r opsiynau i blant.
23. Bydd angen i'r model Cenedlaethol ymchwilio i gyfuno cyllidebau ledled Cymru, er mwyn dileu'r farchnad gystadleuol rhwng awdurdodau lleol wrth ddelio â lleoliadau mabwysiadu. Dylai hyn yn ei dro arwain at lawer llai o oedi yn y broses i blant a darpar fabwysiadwyr. Mae'r fframwaith cyfreithiol ar gyfer cyllidebau cyfun wedi'i hen sefydlu ac rydym wedi buddsoddi llawer er mwyn meithrin dealltwriaeth o sut i'w rheoli yn y byd go iawn.

Dibyniaethau Allweddol

24. Er mai panel a 'Phenderfynwr' yr asiantaeth fabwysiadu sy'n ystyried addaswydd plentyn i gael ei fabwysiadu, y llysoedd sy'n penderfynu ai mabwysiadu yw'r peth gorau i'r plentyn ac a ddylid caniatáu Gorchymyn Lleoli/Gorchymyn Mabwysiadu, proses annatganoledig sy'n rhan o gylch gwaith y Weinyddiaeth Gyfiawnder (**gweler Ffigur 1**).
25. Yn Chwefror 2012, drwy Ddatganiad Gweinidogol, hysbysais aelodau o gyhoeddiad cydymateb Llywodraeth Cymru/Llywodraeth y DU i'r Adolygiad Cyfiawnder Teuluol sy'n ymdrin â materion datganoledig ac annatganoledig. Mae'r Adolygiad yn cyflwyno cynlluniau ar gyfer diwygiadau mawr i'r system cyfiawnder teuluol er mwyn delio â'r oedi, symleiddio'r system a chryfhau rhianta.
26. Bydd creu Bwrdd Cyfiawnder Teuluol i Gymru a Lloegr yn sicrhau mwy o arweiniad a chydgyssylltu ar draws asiantaethau cyflawni yn genedlaethol ac yn lleol, wrth baratoi ar gyfer unrhyw newidiadau dilynol i'r system. I sicrhau bod materion yng Nghymru yn cael sylw priodol a dyledus mae'r Bwrdd Cyfiawnder Teuluol yn cynnwys cynrychiolwyr o Gymdeithas Cyfarwyddwyr y Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol a CAF/CASS Cymru, yn ogystal ag uwch-swyddog o Lywodraeth Cymru. Bydd y cynrychiolwyr hyn yn cynghori ar y cyd-destun Cymreig penodol ac ar agweddau datganoledig allweddol ar y system cyfiawnder teuluol, gan sicrhau bod hawliau a lleisiau plant yn ganolog i'r broses yng Nghymru. At hynny, rwyf wedi sefydlu Rhwydwaith Cyfiawnder Teuluol yng Nghymru i ddod â phobl allweddol y system cyfiawnder teuluol ynghyd ar lefel Cymru gyfan, gan sicrhau cyd-ddealltwriaeth leol a nod cyffredin i wella gwasanaethau a chanlyniadau i blant a theluoedd yng Nghymru. Bydd y Rhwydwaith Cyfiawnder Teuluol yn sicrhau bod cynrychiolwyr Cymru ar y Bwrdd Cyfiawnder Teuluol yn cael digon o gymorth er mwyn i faterion Cymreig gael eu hystyried yn y cyd-destun cenedlaethol.
27. Ni all ac ni ddylai gweithwyr cymdeithasol weithio ar wahân wrth wneud penderfyniadau anodd ynghylch mabwysiadu. Mae angen fframwaith rheoleiddiol arnynt sy'n darparu'r rhwystrau a'r amddiffynfeydd sy'n caniatáu iddynt weithio'n hyderus, ond sy'n osgoi dyblygu ac oedi diangen. Gan hynny, mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn ddiweddar wedi derbyn argymhelliad yr Adolygiad Cyfiawnder Teuluol i ddileu un o swyddogaethau'r paneli mabwysiadu. Mae'r fframwaith rheoleiddiol yn ei gwneud yn ofynnol i awdurdodau lleol sefydlu paneli mabwysiadu, i roi cyngor ar rai penderfyniadau a wneir gan asiantaethau mabwysiadu. Un o rolau paneli mabwysiadu yw rhoi cyngor i awdurdodau lleol ar y penderfyniad ai mabwysiadu sydd orau i blentyn penodol. Fodd bynnag, yn y rhan fwyaf o achosion, ni all yr awdurdod lleol weithredu ar y penderfyniad hwnnw a lleoli plentyn i'w fabwysiadu oni bai fod llys teulu yn cytuno i wneud gorchymyn lleoli. Yn yr achosion hyn, dadleuodd yr Adolygiad Cyfiawnder Teuluol nad oedd angen i'r panel mabwysiadu ddyblygu rôl y llys drwy ddarparu craffu annibynnol ar y dystiolaeth ym mhob achos unigol. Bydd y Llywodraeth yn gweithredu'r argymhelliad i ddileu'r rôl hon sydd gan baneli

Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc: Ymchwiliad i Wasanaethau Mabwysiadu yng Nghymru

mabwysiadu drwy newidiadau i reoliadau a ddaw i rym ar 1 Medi 2012. Lle na fydd y llys ynghlwm wrth achos, bydd y panel mabwysiadu yn cadw'r swyddogaeth hon.

28. Mae'r Adolygiad hefyd yn nodi argymhellion ar gyfer datblygiad proffesiynol gweithwyr cymdeithasol, gan roi mwy o bwyslais ar ddatblygiad plant a hyfforddiant i wella cynnwys asesiadau sy'n bodloni gofynion y llysoedd wrth wneud penderfyniadau am blant. Mae'r Adolygiad yn awgrymu y dylai deddfwriaeth newydd osod terfyn amser ar achosion gofal – sef dim mwy na chwe mis i bob achos heblaw'r rhai mwyaf cymhleth ac anodd. Mae hefyd yn argymhell newid y gofynion adnewyddu ar gyfer gorchmynion gofal interim fel nad oes angen i bobl ddychwelyd i'r llys o hyd pan fydd achosion gofal yn parhau⁴. Byddai barnwyr yn gyfrifol am amserlennu a rheoli achosion, yn unol â'r ddeddfwriaeth arfaethedig i bennu terfynau amser ar gyfer achosion gofal. Mae'r Adolygiad yn argymhell na ddylai'r llysoedd, yn y dyfodol, graffu ar fanylion cynllun gofal y plentyn a baratowyd gan yr awdurdod lleol. Dim ond ar y materion hanfodol y dylai graffu, sef ble y dylai'r plentyn fyw ar ddiwedd yr achos gofal a faint o gyswllt y dylai ei gael ag aelodau'r teulu os na fydd yn dychwelyd adref. Ceir sawl argymhelliad ar wella'r hyfforddiant i farnwyr ac ar sicrhau dilyniant barnwrol mewn achosion plant. Mae'r Adolygiad hefyd yn argymhell creu un llys teulu yn lle'r llys tair haen presennol.
29. Yn ogystal â dileu'r swyddogaeth benodol hon sydd gan baneli, ac yng ngoleuni newidiadau pellach i'r gwasanaeth mabwysiadu yng Nghymru drwy sefydlu Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol, mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn ystyried dileu'r rheoliad sy'n cyfyngu ar sefydlu cyd-baneli mabwysiadu gan unrhyw ddau ond dim mwy na thri awdurdod lleol.

Fframwaith Cyfreithiol

30. Ni fydd y Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol yn gweithredu fel "asiantaeth fabwysiadu" fel y cyfeirir ati yn Neddf Mabwysiadu a Phlant 2002 ac yn Rheoliadau Asiantaethau Mabwysiadu (Cymru) 2005 a wnaethpwyd o dan adran 9 o Ddeddf Mabwysiadu a Phlant 2002. Bydd y corff newydd, fodd bynnag, yn cael ei arolygu o dan Ddeddf Safonau Gofal 2000. Bydd y trefniadau ar gyfer arolygu'r Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol yn cael eu nodi yn y rheoliadau.

Sylwadau cloi

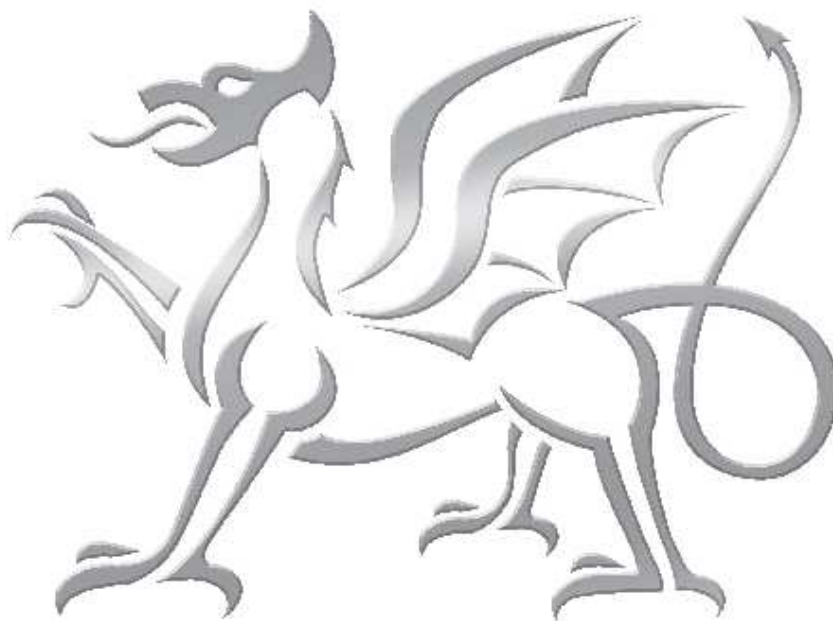
31. Nod ac amcan y Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol yw rhagori mewn mabwysiadu drwy sicrhau lleoliadau teuluol parhaol o ansawdd uchel ar gyfer plant sy'n derbyn gofal y byddai mabwysiadu yn llesol iddynt. Bydd angen i'r gwasanaeth newydd ddod yn un pwynt cyfeirio i'r holl blant â chynllun mabwysiadu, drwy sefydlu a chynnal un gofrestr.
32. Yr unig ffordd o sicrhau perchenogaeth o'r diwygiadau hyn yw drwy lywodraeth leol a sector gwirfoddol sy'n gwerthfawrogi'r manteision ac yn eu huchafu drwy ddarparu gwasanaethau o ansawdd a gwaith partneriaeth effeithiol i ehangu cydweithredu.
33. Ym marn Llywodraeth Cymru, y ffordd orau o gyflawni'r rhaglen hon ar gyfer newid yw drwy waith partneriaeth a chydweithredu cryf ag awdurdodau lleol, y sector annibynnol a'r sector gwirfoddol. Mae Grŵp Cyngori Arbenigol ar Fabwysiadu wedi'i sefydlu i oruchwylio datblygiad Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Cenedlaethol a fydd yn ysgogi gwelliannau mewn perfformiad ledled Cymru o ran gwasanaethau mabwysiadu penodol yng Nghymru.

⁴ Adroddiad Terfynol yr Adolygiad Cyfiawnder Teuluol – Tachwedd 2011

Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc: Ymchwiliad i Wasanaethau Mabwysiadu yng Nghymru

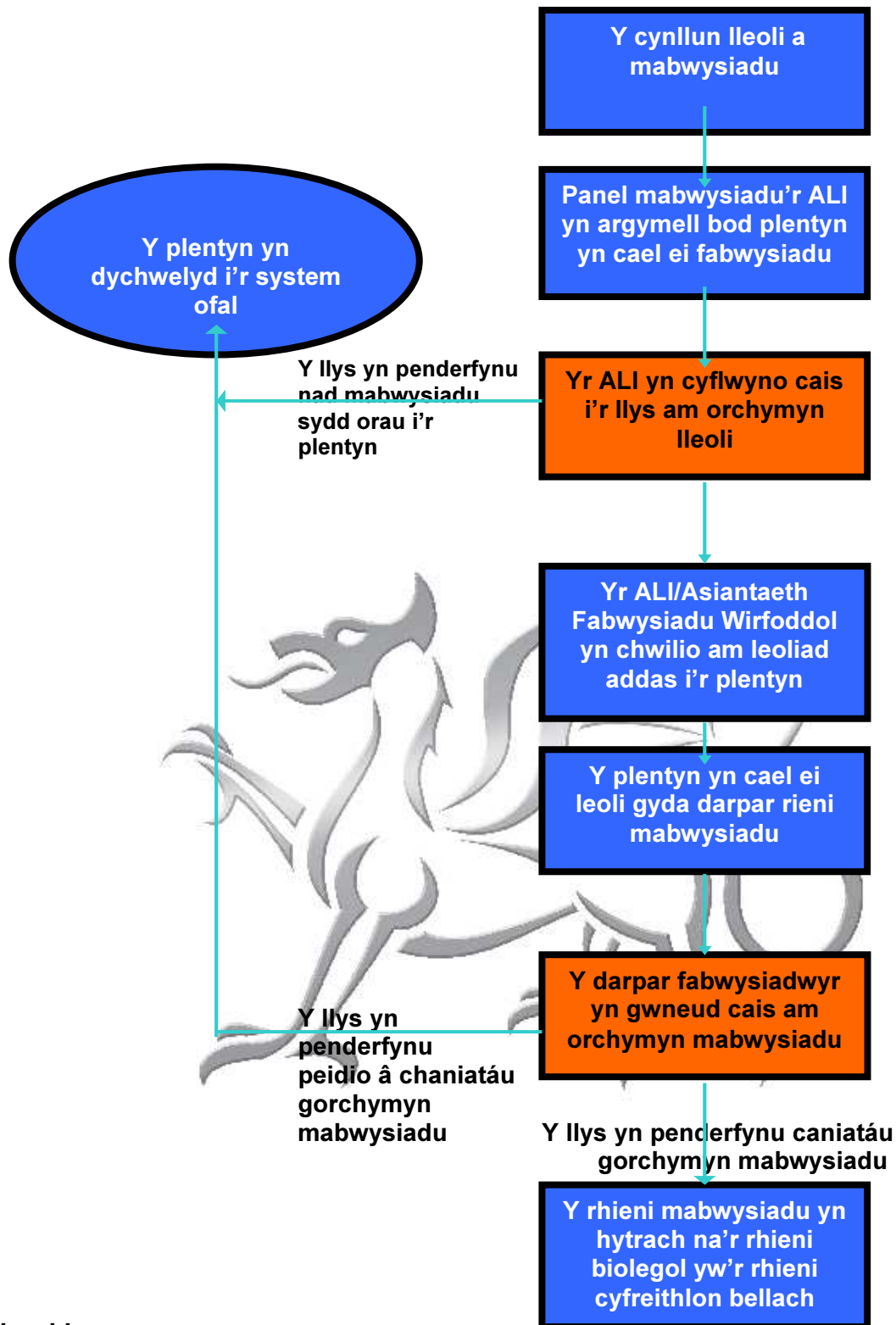
34. Mae'r Grŵp yn dwyn ynghyd gynrychiolwyr o'r tu mewn i system fabwysiadu Cymru, i sicrhau cyd-ddealltwriaeth a nod cyffredin wrth oruchwylio, cydgysylltu a gwella gwasanaethau a chanlyniadau i blant a phobl ifanc yng Nghymru y byddai mabwysiadu yn llesol iddynt, ac i gynnig gwasanaeth sy'n annog ac yn croesawu ystod eang o ddarpar fabwysiadwyr; mae angen iddo'u paratoi yn drwyadl ar gyfer yr heriau a'r pleserau niferus sy'n gysylltiedig â rhoi cartref cariadlon i blentyn; ac i amlhau'r niferoedd sy'n mynd ymlaen i fabwysiadu'n llwyddiannus.
35. Cylch gwaith y Grŵp hwn yw ystyried cynigion gan awdurdodau lleol a'u partneriaid wrth ddatblygu fframwaith ar gyfer model gwasanaeth cenedlaethol, sy'n gweithredu dan system ddwy haen (lleol a chenedlaethol) ac sy'n ymdrin â phryderon cyfredol, heb gollu cryfderau diamheuol y system bresennol – gan sicrhau newid heb niwed.

**Y Dirprwy Weinidog Plant a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Mehfin 2012**



Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc: Ymchwiliad i Wasanaethau Mabwysiadu yng Nghymru

Ffigur 1: Y rhaniad gweithdrefnol rhwng yr Awdurdodau Lleol a'r Llysoedd



Allwedd

- Cyfrifoldeb y Weinyddiaeth Gyfiawnder
- Cyfrifoldeb yr Awdurdod Lleol (ALI)

Children and Young People Committee – School Standards and Organisations (Wales) Bill

This document outlines the contributions of the groups and participants that the Outreach Team has conducted focus groups with. The group's details were provided by networks such as ESTYN, Governors Wales and PTA UK.

Summary

Groups worked with

English medium primary
Welsh medium primary
English medium Secondary
Welsh medium Secondary
Faith
Special Education

Total number of participants

45

Total number of schools represented

34

School organisation

Group name	Does the current process for determining school organisation proposals need to be reformed?
Eagleswell Primary School and Nursery Unit - Vale of Glamorgan	Yes. The current process is too long. Three months for the promoter to make a decision following the opportunity to object is too long.
Cartref Bontnewydd	Yes- even though the group weren't really informed on the process before hand when explained to them they thought proposals should be reformed.
Swansea Association of Governing Bodies	Yes. Many individuals within the group are aware of this process and have dealt with it in the past.
Bridgend Governors Association	A few of the group had been involved and were aware of the process, but didn't suggest it needed changing.

Group name	What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of the current process?
Eagleswell Primary School and Nursery Unit - Vale of Glamorgan	<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It gives people who are disconnected from the local issues (WG) the ability to make the decision, so in theory they would be more likely to be impartial. • It gives local people the ability to contribute during the proposer's consultation period at public meetings. <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation processes are not mandatory. • The WG may not know enough about the school and the issues attached. Being detached from local issues was seen as both a positive and a negative. • Process for local councillors, parents, school governors, teachers and headmaster to be involved doesn't seem to be mandatory. • School governors, the headmaster and parents should be involved in the final decision, not just the WG.
Cartref Bontnewydd	<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even if the proposal only receives 1 objection- it is taken seriously (even though the group did question the resource/ cost implication of this method). <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group felt that the 'proposer' had a lot of influence in the early stages- undertaking consultation, analysing responses and decide whether to proceed. They questioned if this was done in an impartial manner, for example who decides who is consulted, how is the decision made as the 'proposer' has an obvious interest in the matter.
Swansea Association of Governing Bodies	<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The guidance outlining the need to consult. Consultation with local people is usually difficult and passionate, but necessary

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot to be said about the final decision being made by someone detached from local issues. <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many didn't like the fact that local authorities and other bodies have strict and tight deadlines to reach within the process, but the same didn't seem to apply to the Welsh Ministers. • The group thought that 4–6 months was too long a time to wait for the Welsh Ministers to issue their decision. One of the main reasons for this was that individuals who may be affected by any change would be very anxious for a decision, and would want it as soon as possible. Ministers dragging their heels makes this period very tense for all involved. • Some individuals within the group raised concerns that the final decision is made by a person/body who are not aware of local feeling, and do not take such factors into consideration. However others later saw this as a benefit. • Consultation period is perceived by many as a box ticking exercise. Many of the group felt that once it has got to a stage where they are consulting on the matter that the decision had already been made, regardless of people feelings.
Bridgend Governors Association	<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None mentioned <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One person objecting is too small a threshold • Clarification over what an objection actually constitutes is needed. In one past instance, one of the group wanted clarification on a proposer's plans, but it was seen as an objection. As a result this triggered a consultation process, when all he wanted was more information. • Consultation is done without considering those who will be affected in the future, i.e. parents at a local primary school, if the proposal relates to a secondary school in the area. • At the moment the process isn't transparent. Though it states that the Minister makes the final decision, it doesn't give any real detail on how he or she may reach that decision. The group felt that it may not be the Minister but some of his supporting team that actually make these decisions.

Group name	Is it appropriate that an objection to a proposal from a single objector without a direct interest in a school causes a referral to Welsh Ministers?
Eagleswell Primary School and Nursery Unit – Vale of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No – the WG shouldn't have to deal with objections just because one person has objected. • The whole group said that the threshold for objectors

Glamorgan	should be a number or percentage (whichever is lower), as is proposed with parents meetings. This would mean that smaller schools would not be at a disadvantage.
Cartref Bontnewydd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No –this was seen as an unnecessary and wasteful way of dealing with objections.
Swansea Association of Governing Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group felt that this would take up a lot of the Ministers time. The group did feel that there should be a percentage and number associated with the proposed threshold, as is the case with annual parents’ meetings proposals.
Bridgend Governors Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, should be more.

Group name	What are your views on the introduction of a statutory Code on School Organisation?
Eagleswell Primary School and Nursery Unit – Vale of Glamorgan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group liked the idea of there being more formal process in place rather than just referring to guidance. They did feel however that it would be difficult to say if it’s a good idea or not until they knew exactly what the Code would say, and how it would differ to the guidance. They also said that understanding what sanctions would be imposed are important – hard to say one way or another without this detail being available. Felt that maybe there should be some reference to the principles of the code at this stage.
Cartref Bontnewydd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group felt strongly that there should be consistency across regions and Wales and having statutory code would ensure this would be adhered to. Without being able to see the code they felt that they couldn’t really comment further on this.
Swansea Association of Governing Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liked the idea of a consistent approach in consultation Many who have been involved in the process felt that introducing the code wouldn’t actually change a great deal. Because the WG guidance is seen as such an important document to refer to already and those who are proposing changes are aware that changes to school organisation are very contentious issues. As a result they follow the guidance very closely already. Overall, they were in favour of any code that would promote consistency across the country, but were slightly weary as they don’t know what the code would include at this stage. Stressed that the code should promote the importance of the consultation process, and the process shouldn’t be a box ticking exercise, and that peoples thoughts and feelings should carry real weight.
Bridgend Governors Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good idea. Should lead to a more consistent approach, especially with regards to those who should be consulted with.

Group name	What are your views on the requirement on the Welsh Ministers to consult on the Code? Are there any groups that the Welsh Ministers should be required to consult before issuing the Code, e.g. local authorities, governing bodies etc.?
Eagleswell Primary School and Nursery Unit – Vale of Glamorgan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think its essential the consult before issuing the code. • Parents, teachers, community representatives, governing body, local councillors and residents should be consulted before issuing the code.
Cartref Bontnewydd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of course, everybody involved with schools should have the opportunity to be consulted on the code. Informal focus groups were deemed to be very popular consultation method for this type of work.
Swansea Association of Governing Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group felt that the WG should consult with the following: SNAPcharity, WLGA, Governors Wales, PTA UK, head teachers unions, Children’s Commissioner, local authority representatives and the twenty two local authority budget forums.
Bridgend Governors Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local authorities, governors, senior staff and management teams. • It’s important that the WG consults with individuals and groups who have experience of using the process. That experience is vital.

Group name	What are your views on the procedure for adopting the draft Code? Is there an appropriate level of involvement of the National Assembly?
Eagleswell Primary School and Nursery Unit – Vale of Glamorgan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No comment.
Cartref Bontnewydd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No comment.
Swansea Association of Governing Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seemed reasonable.
Bridgend Governors Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No comment.

Group name	What are your views on the ‘Categories of objectors’ (attached at Annexe 1)? Are the categories appropriate; in particular, is the weighting of objectors appropriate?
Eagleswell Primary School and Nursery Unit – Vale of Glamorgan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 is fair • PTA’s, parents and staff should be in Category 2 • Some of the group felt that the categories should depend on the issue, and the categories should vary

	between different types of reform
Cartref Bontnewydd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 received a unanimous agreement. • It was felt that maybe the school council should be included in Category 2 • Category 3- felt that it was important that the pupils were made fully aware of any proposals so that they could form their opinion.
Swansea Association of Governing Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No real comments regarding how they were grouped. • Some felt that finding the required number of objectors would be easy, and depending on your point of view, that could be a good thing or a bad thing. • If the purpose of this is to make it more difficult for objections to be made, this wouldn't achieve it. • The group wanted changes to result in a quicker decision making process once the threshold was met.
Bridgend Governors Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If one person held multiple roles (i.e. a parent that was also a member of staff at a school), they should be restricted to having one vote, rather than one as a representative of each role. • Happy with 10 objectors from category three. • The % mechanism that is used along with the figure for annual parents meetings should be adopted here as well. • Those who make up each category are fine. No changes were suggested.

Group name	What are your views on the constitution of the local determination panels, including those who are disqualified from membership of the panel?
Eagleswell Primary School and Nursery Unit - Vale of Glamorgan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many felt that it was unrealistic that the local authority would be able to find panel members who has had no connection with the appointing authority, the proposer or the school • A few of the group thought that 5 panel members wouldn't be enough, and rather than only having local people as part of the panel, that there should be a mix of local people and people from outside the area (maybe from a neighbouring authority or WG) to provide balance and a more objective view as well as appreciating local issues.
Cartref Bontnewydd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of discussion on the impartiality of this group. • It was felt that maybe having an official from the WG to chair would be appropriate. • Also questions were raised on how this panel would be chosen? Parents/ schools to have a say on this maybe. • Agreement that Members of the local authority's executive should not be on the panels. • Questions were raised over whether or not there would be difficulty with finding people to sit on these panels who did not have any connections with the appointing authority/ proposer etc.
Swansea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The whole group were very dubious about the local

<p>Association of Governing Bodies</p>	<p>determination panels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned those members of the local authority who are not cabinet members could be from the same party as those on the cabinet, which would affect their attitude and behaviour on a panel. • Some suggested ideas such as tapping into regional consortiums, so that decision making panels are made up of truly objective voices, which don't have a connection to any interested parties. • To expect a local authority to act as judge, jury and executioner in these matter puts major doubts over the legitimacy of the panel, and the decision making process. • More clarity is needed over what a "connection" to the local authority actually means. • Some parts of the group saw the establishment of a LDP as a quango, and a major cop out. Seen as a badly thought out idea as these panels will never be able to be truly independent. • Large consensus that these plans would cause more problems than it would solve, adding complexities to the process, and potentially making the process longer, which the group were very much against. • The buck should stop with the Minister, potentially a role for Assembly Members in the process as well (those who do not represent the constituency/region). • They don't see the problem being that the Minister is the one responsible for making the decision. The major problem with the current system is the time it takes for the Minister to reach a decision, and the impact that has on all involved. They felt that these proposals do not fix that. • Decision should be made by an independent person/body.
<p>Bridgend Governors Association</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree with the idea in principle • Local authority members should not be involved; it needs to be totally independent. Local authority representation should come from a different authority than the one in which the school is based to ensure that independence. • The panel should be made up of: someone with local authority experience, a director of education or assistant director who has experience of education management, a school governor (or chair of governors, and a lay governor. Strong feeling that school governors should be a required presence on these panels. • Training would need to be provided for people to enable them to take part effectively in this process if they are expected to be on a panel. Suggestion of a training module on LDP, which would include how to feed the information back to the Minister. • Like the fact that LDP's could aid transparency of the

	<p>decision making process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group were not clear if the LDP's decision was final, or if they were responsible for reporting back to the Minister who would then make the decision. They felt that the LDP should report back, but ultimately the decision would be made by the Minister.
--	--

Annual parents meeting

Group name	Do the current arrangements for holding annual parents' meetings need reforming?
Eagleswell Primary School and Nursery Unit - Vale of Glamorgan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participants had differing opinions on this matter. Many of them were in favour of keeping one annual meeting in order for there to be a forum to discuss things such as the School Development Plan However only one of the nine currently attends the meeting at the moment.
Catref Bontnewydd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 out of the 9 in the focus group had attended a Parents Evening (however not on a regular basis). One parent noted that there had been a parents evening the previous night in her child's primary school and she was the only one that attended. One of the main concerns with the current arrangements was that it was not well publicised. A lot of schools depended on the child bringing a letter home to the parents. However some that had children in secondary school reported that the school was starting to use text/ email to publicise, which was seen as a positive move. Some felt that the schools deliberately didn't them inform them in advance of meetings and didn't fully explain the purpose so that they didn't attend.
Swansea Association of School Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current attendance levels are a joke. The average attendance of most AGM's is between 0 - 3 parents (discounting those who are governors). There were two exceptions to this general rule where one school had 10 in their last one, and another had around 20. Meeting is seen as a waste of time.
Bridgend Governors Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absolutely. It's not needed, parents don't attend and it's a waste of time. One of the group said she has been a governor for over 30 years, and she has yet to have a single parent (other than those who are governors) attend. In general the group felt that unless parents have a concern, they will not attend such meetings. In the most cases parents' issues can be resolved by speaking with the headmaster. In most schools in their area, the headmaster's door is always open, though they acknowledged that this may not be the case everywhere in Wales, so there does need to be a process in place to allow parents to raise their

	concerns.
--	-----------

Group name	What are the advantages and disadvantages of the current arrangements?
Eagleswell Primary School and Nursery Unit – Vale of Glamorgan	<p>Advantage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A forum to discuss school performance and update parents <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings are poorly attended, are not publicised well, and are not inviting for the majority of parents • It doesn't give parents the ability to raise concerns throughout the year
Catref Bontnewydd	<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a definite purpose– parents know what to expect. <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No opportunity to put views forward in current annual meetings– most of it is the school reporting back on things. • A lot of discussions on how well the school is doing/ stats etc that the group felt that they didn't really understand and could not put into context. • Some felt that they weren't welcomed
Swansea Association of School Governors	<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information should be shared to parents and this is a place where this can be done <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The WG sets tight guidance on what the report should include and how it should be laid out. Schools/governing bodies do not have the freedom to produce it in a format in which they feel is suitable. As a result most parents don't understand the document. The report is very boring to read, too bureaucratic, there is far too much guidance to follow, and as a result it is not an effective way of communicating with stakeholders. • In general, turnout is extremely low, so annual meetings do not achieve what it sets out to do. • Annual meetings were seen as quite out dated methods of informing parents by some of the group – highlighting other communication methods, such as stakeholder days and updating information on their websites. If other communication methods are used effectively it reduces the need of an annual meeting.
Bridgend Governors Association	<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no advantages to the current system, other than the necessity to produce a report, which the group felt was important to keep. <p>Disadvantages</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regardless of when or where the meeting is held, no one shows up. This is true for primary and secondary schools. • If parents have a big concern they wouldn't wait for an annual meeting to raise it, they would act upon it quicker. • In the very rare instances parents have turned up it was to discuss things outside of the annual report. The meeting is not an effective way of sharing that information with parents.
--	--

Group name	What are your views on the four conditions that need to be met before a parents' meeting is held?
Eagleswell Primary School and Nursery Unit – Vale of Glamorgan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy with all of the conditions other than condition three. • Some felt that there shouldn't be a limit on the number of meetings they can request. • Others felt that three were more than enough.
Catref Bontnewydd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second condition– the group felt that strict guidelines were needed to explain what could be discussed in these meetings and what couldn't i.e. could an issue with a specific teacher is a “matter relating to the school”. • Third condition– group raised concerns with limiting to 3 a year– what if an urgent/ important matter was raised after the third meeting was held– some flexibility was needed on this. Also some parents could work together to ensure that they get the subjects that mattered to them discussed in the 3 meetings. • Third condition– the group thought that pencilling in 3 dates at the beginning of the school year as dates for the meeting should be considered (however they did understand that this doesn't really go with the ethos of the petitioning and reacting to urgent matters)
Swansea Association of School Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be a cap on the number of meetings. Although some suggested that in reality, a school would never object to another meeting – and that may then be done more informally outside this process. Some felt that three was too much, and that 2 was an appropriate amount.
Bridgend Governors Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First condition– liked the fact that the threshold was a figure and a percentage, and happy with the other aspects of the criteria. • Second condition– seemed fine on the face of things; however it should also specify rules over who should attend. Should there be a requirement for certain post holders to attend, i.e. head teacher, chair of governing body, or would it be up to the petitioner to decide who is required at the meeting? What if the meeting is

	<p>called to discuss an individual? Should that individual have to attend? Some thought needs to be put into this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third condition- a minimum of four meetings (one a term) was preferred by the group. The group also questioned if a meeting would be required to follow up on a previous meeting. For example if a meeting is requested, and the issues are discussed, would the petitioner need to request another meeting to be updated on any actions/progress from the initial meeting? • Fourth condition- seemed fine, the Bill should specify 20 school days not calendar days.
--	--

Group name	Are the minimum numbers for signatories on a petition appropriate and/or reasonable?
Eagleswell Primary School and Nursery Unit - Vale of Glamorgan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally happy with the number of signatures, and thought the mix between percentages or numbers of signatures depending on type and size of school was a good idea. • They raised concerns that some parents have more than one registered pupil at schools, so effectively they would have more influence than another parent who may only have one registered child at the school.
Catref Bontnewydd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of signatures was deemed fair enough by the group. • However the group felt that lines of communication needed to be opened for parents to be able to communicate and collect signatories. An email forum (or similar) was suggested as otherwise some parents could be left out or could struggle to get the minimum number (resource implications).
Swansea Association of School Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group seemed happy with this and felt that the figure and percentage system worked well.
Bridgend Governors Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The numbers required to obtain seemed fair.

Group name	Is it appropriate that the onus will be on parents to have to request a parents' meeting with governors?
	What are the implications for parents of having to organise a petition and how would this work in practice?
Eagleswell Primary School and Nursery Unit - Vale of Glamorgan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No consensus on this issue. Half of the group felt they would only go if they had an issue they wanted to raise, or if they were concerned about something. The other half felt they would go to annual meetings if they were better publicised, and were less intimidating. One of the group was a part of the school PTA and didn't know when the annual meeting took place. Another member of the group said that she goes to all meetings regarding the school that she is

	<p>made aware of, and hasn't been to an annual parents meeting in five years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group didn't raise any concerns over how the process of petitioning would work in practice. • They felt that any new proposals should keep the annual meeting, but liked the idea of parents being able to petition to raise concerns in addition to this.
Catref Bontnewydd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was great concern over this being the only forum for parent's to have a meeting with governors. • They thought that the Annual Parents meeting should continue as this was an annual event where parents were able to hear about school progress/ development etc. They felt that this should be put forward by the school's management and that parents shouldn't have to request this. • The group also felt that some parents would not be comfortable writing a petition and that a template should be available for parents to use. • The group also expressed concern over the petitioning process- in principle the idea was welcomed as a forum for parent to be able to ask the school to discuss a matter with them, however some did have concerns over the schools response to the petition and the quality of the answers that they would get. • There was also a great concern among the parents that 'the usual suspects' would be the ones who use the petitions system. There was also a concern over some schools being 'clicky'- with a group of parents dominating things. • Some parents also felt that they wouldn't be approached to sign the petition, and that they also wouldn't feel comfortable asking some 'groups of parents' for their signatures. • Some parents also don't actually go to the school gates so there would be resource implications in terms of collecting signatures. • They also felt that they could be seen as 'trouble makers' if they regularly present a petition asking for meetings.
Swansea Association of School Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of the word petition has a negative connotation. Implies anger and outcry. • A different phrase should be used such as apply, seek, request. The word petition is likely to put people off. • Any guidance to those who can petition a meeting needs to be easily understandable, clear and without use the use of jargon, to ensure that parents buy into the system. • The group stated that parents should have to state what the purpose of the meeting was. And what is to stop people requesting meetings over the same issue three times a year? • Some concerns that parents do not get together in this way at the moment. Unrealistic to think that many

	<p>parents would come together to petition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This petitioning system could cause confusion with the complaints procedure. This could cause major problems and jeopardise any complaints investigations that are on-going if there was a public meeting discussing it. • The group felt that in the majority of cases the head master would be able to deal with circumstances before it got to this stage. Effective dialogue and communication is key to this.
Bridgend Governors Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitely. They did stress however that the guidance for parents needs to be clearly understandable and jargon free. • In many cases schools will be able to deal with issues without the need for a meeting, so contacting the head master directly should always be the first action. • The group didn't see any potential practical issues to a petitioning process. There should be the opportunity to petition online, and through other means such as a notice boards etc. • The group did see this system as more of a grievance process than a means of sharing information. Parents are unlikely to request a meeting to discuss what is within the annual report.

Group name	Other comments
Eagleswell Primary School and Nursery Unit – Vale of Glamorgan	<p>Annual meeting/report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They felt strongly that parents meetings are not promoted effectively, the perception amongst parents is that they are intimidating, and they don't understand what is being spoken about. More should be done to make the process more accessible to parents.
Catref Bontnewydd	<p>Petitioning system/Annual meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The general feeling among the group was that the petitioning system was an excellent idea for parent to be able to request meetings with the school governing body, however it was strongly felt that the current annual meeting should also be kept as this has a specific purpose (annual school progress/ stats etc) that is separate to the petitioning system.
Swansea Association of School Governors	<p>Annual report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling that producing annual reports is getting difficult, is tedious and they are very restricted with regards to how they can produce them. Consensus that the school should have the ability to write the report in their own format – and the WG should put regulations in place where they list what needs to be included in general, and let the school get on with producing it in the way it sees fit. • Many saw updating termly newsletters and websites as a more modern and effective way of communicating

	<p>messages from the report (although acknowledging that many stakeholders don't have internet access).</p>
<p>Bridgend Governors Association</p>	<p>Annual report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the group felt that there should be a standardised way of producing the report, others felt there should be freedom to present it how they feel fit, as long as some mandatory points are covered. • Needs to be kept simple, less acronyms, less jargon. • If you're in the clique, and are used to producing and reading information in this style, then you can understand it. Parents who don't do not understand what is being said. • Some parents may not be very literate themselves, so the language used needs to be simplified, and kept as concise as possible. • Comments that educationalists are poor communicators - training needs to be provided to those producing materials to ensure that it is suitable for the audience. At the moment there is not enough of an effort made to make it more understandable. • There are big restrictions in place at the moment, which don't allow reports to be written in a way that the school/governing body wants. <p>Communication methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An annual meeting is not the most appropriate way to communicate with parents. Other methods need to be looked at, such as leaflets, online etc. • Local authorities/governing bodies/schools should seek to find the preferred communication method of each parent so materials produced are not wasted, and that information is fed through in the most effective way possible. <p>Value of consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group suggested that because LA's come under pressure from the WG to reduce costs etc, that when a LA proposes to make changes (which may be as a result of the WG's pressure) that people feel that the consultation period is meaningless, as the pressure in the first place, and the final decision is made by the same person (WG).