



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

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

Dydd Iau, 31 Ionawr 2013
Thursday, 31 January 2013

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

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

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

Christine Chapman

Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor)
Labour (Committee Chair)

Suzy Davies

Ceidwadwyr Cymreig
Welsh Conservatives

Rebecca Evans	Llafur Labour
Bethan Jenkins	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Julie Morgan	Llafur Labour
Lynne Neagle	Llafur Labour
Jenny Rathbone	Llafur Labour
Aled Roberts	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Simon Thomas	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales

**Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance**

Anna Brychan	Cyfarwyddwr, Cymdeithas Genedlaethol y Prifathrawon Cymru Director, National Association of Head Teachers, Wales
Hugh Davies	Llywydd, Cymdeithas Arweinwyr Ysgolion a Cholegau, Cymru President, Association of School and College Leaders, Wales
David Evans	Ysgrifennydd Cymru, Undeb Cenedlaethol yr Athrawon, Cymru Wales Secretary, National Union of Teachers, Wales
David Healey	Dirprwy Bennaeth Ysgol Friars, Bangor a Chynrychiolydd Gwynedd, Cymdeithas Athrawon a Darlithwyr Deputy Head of Ysgol Friars, Bangor and Gwynedd Representative, Association of Teachers and Lecturers
Gareth Jones	Ysgrifennydd Cymru, Cymdeithas Arweinwyr Ysgolion a Cholegau, Cymru Wales Secretary, Association of School and College Leaders, Wales
Rex Phillips	Trefnydd Cymru, NASUWT, Undeb yr Athrawon Wales Organiser, NASUWT, The Teachers' Union
Tim Pratt	Pennaeth Ysgol Gyfun Caerllion a Chyn-lywydd, Cymdeithas Arweinwyr Ysgolion a Cholegau Cymru Head of Caerleon Comprehensive School and Past President, Association of School and College Leaders, Wales
Rolant Wynne	Swyddog Maes Gogledd Cymru, Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru North Wales Field Officer, UCAC

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

Chloë Davies	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Claire Morris	Clerc Clerk
Sian Thomas	Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service

Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.15 a.m.

The meeting began at 9.15 a.m.

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions

[1] **Christine Chapman:** Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the Assembly's Children and Young People Committee. I remind Members and witnesses that, if they have any mobile phones or BlackBerrys, they should switch them off because they affect the transmission. We have had an apology from Angela Burns. I advise Members that I will, unfortunately, have to leave during the break to attend a funeral, and Rebecca Evans has kindly said that she will chair the remainder of the meeting.

Ymchwiliad i Ymddygiad a Phresenoldeb—Sesiwn Dystiolaeth Inquiry into Attendance and Behaviour—Evidence Session

[2] **Christine Chapman:** The first substantive item on our agenda today is our inquiry into attendance and behaviour. We are taking further evidence on this. We have members of the teaching unions here today. I welcome you all, and ask you to introduce yourselves for the record, please.

[3] **Mr Evans:** I am David Evans, the Wales secretary of the National Union of Teachers Cymru.

[4] **Mr Phillips:** I am Rex Phillips, the Wales organiser for the NASUWT, The Teachers' Union.

[5] **Mr Healey:** I am David Healey, the Gwynedd representative for the Association of Teachers and Lecturers.

[6] **Mr Wynne:** Rolant Wynne ydwyf i, **Mr Wynne:** I am Rolant Wynne, north swyddog maes y gogledd, Undeb Wales field officer for UCAC. Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru.

[7] **Christine Chapman:** Welcome to you all. I thank you for your papers. Members will have read those very carefully. If you are happy, we will go straight into questions. We have about an hour for questions and discussion, and we want to keep the pace going because there are some really interesting and relevant things that we need to discuss. I want to start us off. We have heard conflicting evidence from you, and again, you have slightly different experiences here as teaching unions, as to whether problem behaviour by pupils has increased over time. Why do you think there are different perceptions on the scale of this issue?

[8] **Mr Evans:** Do you want me to start? I am not entirely sure that there are different perceptions. I have looked at the responses from my colleagues' unions, and it seems to me that we are all recognising that there is a difficulty within the schools, and that it has been a constant over some time. Those unions that also represent headteachers have also identified difficulties and problems. I think that some of the problems that we have identified are clearly issues with regard to initial teacher training. That comes out quite strongly. There are issues with regard to support, issues with regard to the availability of pupil referral units, and various different exclusion policies. As for the level of the behaviour and the amount of it over time, once again, we are dealing with what our members tell us. We have to respond to what our members tell us. Sometimes, the issues are dealt with at the school without our ever hearing of it. There will be a differing number of instances that are reported to us, but it is clear from our members that this problem remains constant and still needs to be dealt with.

[9] **Mr Phillips:** I think that we would share that view. Certainly, the thread that comes through from our members, and I think from other trade unions, is that one of the major issues is the low-level disruption in schools, and the processes that are put in place to tackle that. That would be a common thread running through this. Incidents of very serious bad behaviour are few and far between in our schools, fortunately, and many of our schools provide safe havens for pupils. However, the difference in perception will come in the way in which the issues are tackled within our schools, the policies that are applied, and the lack of consistency, perhaps, in terms of the policies and their application across schools. That is what comes through to us, and as David has said, we rely on the views that come through from our members, the studies that we undertake and our member questionnaires, because we try to get information directly from the practitioners in the classroom to see how they feel. So, we will have a slightly different perspective from—not from the unions that represent headteachers, because we all represent headteachers, but the unions that solely represent headteachers.

[10] **Mr Healey:** I do not know why there is a difference of opinion between the four unions. In the case of ATL, it could be the fact that it has more members from the independent sector than the others; that could be behind it. However, within ATL there is a range of opinions on behaviour for exactly the reasons that Rex and David have highlighted, namely different members come from different schools where the management structures and policies are different and, therefore, there will be a range of experiences. The catchments of schools are different. It is a gross generalisation, but, typically, pupils who come from the leafy suburbs and the educated classes tend to value education more highly and be less disruptive than those from a less advantaged background.

[11] **Mr Wynne:** Bore da. Swyddog maes wyf i yn y gogledd, ac mae llawer o'r dystiolaeth rydych wedi ei chael gennym yn ymwneud â'n tystiolaeth fel swyddogion maes. Yr hyn rydym wedi ei ganfod yw y bu cynnydd amlwg yn y nifer o achosion o ymddygiad eithafol, yn arbennig yn y blynyddoedd cynnar. Daw hynny wrth aelodau sydd yn cysylltu â ni'n uniongyrchol. Efallai bod problemau ymddygiad ar lefel isel yn gyffredinol, ond mae ysgolion yn gallu delio â'r rheini. Mae llawer o'r prosiectau hybu sgiliau cymdeithasol plant sydd ar waith mewn ysgolion wedi datrys llawer o'r problemau hynny yn y blynyddoedd cynnar. Yr hyn rydym yn ei glywed gan aelodau yw bod cynnydd sylweddol mewn nifer bach ond arwyddocaol o blant sydd yn ymosodol eu natur yn y ddwy neu dair blynedd gyntaf a bod hynny yn amharu ar waith yr ysgol a gwaith y dosbarth yn benodol, gan roi athrawon a'r disgyblion eraill mewn perygl. Maent yn arwain rhai plant eraill i fod yn ofnus. Fel cyn-brifathro, mae rhieini wedi dweud wrthyf, 'Dydy fy mab ddim isio dod i'r ysgol oherwydd bod hwn a hwn yn taro allan yn y dosbarth.' Nid hwy sydd yn gwneud ond hwy sydd yn colli'r ysgol, oherwydd ymddygiad plentyn arall.

Mr Wynne: Good morning. I am a field officer in north Wales, and much of the evidence that you have received from us emanates from our evidence as field officers. What we have seen is that there has been a clear increase in the cases of extreme behaviour, especially in the early years. That is what members have told us directly. Perhaps there is low-level disruption occurring more generally, but schools can cope with that. Many of the projects to improve children's social skills that are under way in schools have resolved many of those problems in the early years. What we hear from members is that there is a substantial increase in a small but significant number of children who are lashing out in the first two or three years and that that affects the work of the school and of the classroom specifically, putting teachers and the other pupils at risk. That leads to some of the other children being fearful. As an ex-headteacher, parents have told me 'My son doesn't want to come to school because so-and-so is lashing out in the classroom.' They are not the ones doing this, but they are the ones who are missing school, because of the behaviour of another child.

[12] **Christine Chapman:** I know that we will delve into the specifics of this and that

Members are keen to hear your views on whether there should be any changes, for example. I will move on now to Suzy Davies.

[13] **Suzy Davies:** You have given us a broad indication of some of the types of behaviour that have changed and that are affecting schools, children and their classmates. Since 2008, when the initial strategy came out, three separate plans have followed on from that strategy. Do you think that, during that five-year period, those three plans have addressed the problems that you have outlined today? If they have not, where do you think that the gaps are? The answers will be developed, I am sure, by other questions, but can you start us off?

[14] **Mr Evans:** I am happy to start off on that. There have been three separate plans. We have engaged with any initiatives, research, reviews or inquiries that there have been into this, because it is such an important issue for our members. The fact that there have been three separate plans over five years and the fact that we are here today discussing this again indicates that they are not working at this moment in time. Our members are not reporting back to us about any real improvement in behaviour. There have been some changes, there have been some better strategies and there have been some subtle differences, but, unfortunately, from our members' point of view, the changes have been subtle and more needs to be looked at.

[15] **Christine Chapman:** You do not all have to answer everything, because I am sure that there is a lot of common ground, so do not worry about that. Are there any other comments?

[16] **Mr Wynne:** Mae llawer o brosiectau wedi cael eu rhoi ar waith dros y pum mlynedd diwethaf. Mae hyn wedi arwain at welliant mewn pocedi bach. Rydym wedi canfod bod adnoddau'r awdurdodau efallai wedi cael eu canolbwyntio ar y prosiectau hynny ar draul yr ysgolion yn gyffredinol. Mae cynlluniau llwyddiannus wedi cael eu rhoi ar waith, er enghraifft ffyrdd amlasiantaethol o weithio, ond mae'r mewnbwn amlasiantaethol mewn ysgolion eraill wedi dioddef yn sgîl hynny. Yn ogystal, mae llawer o gynlluniau ar waith, ond nid ydynt yn gynaliadwy. Felly, er bod yr ystadegau a'r adroddiadau'n dweud bod y gwaith amlasiantaethol yn arwain at welliant arwyddocaol o ran presenoldeb ac, efallai, ymddygiad, y gwirionedd yw nad yw'r adnoddau ar gael i gynnal gwasanaeth ar yr un lefel ar draws yr ysgolion, ac ni chewch newid yn yr ystadegau cenedlaethol heb fod yr un gwasanaeth yn cael ei ddarparu.

Mr Wynne: A lot of schemes have been put into practice over the last five years. This has led to an improvement in small pockets. We have found that the resources of authorities may have been concentrated on those projects at the expense of schools in general. Successful schemes have been implemented, for example, multi-agency working, but that is at the expense of multi-agency input in other schools. In addition, a lot of schemes have been implemented, but they are unsustainable. Therefore, even though the statistics and the reports state that multi-agency work is leading to significant improvement in attendance and, perhaps, behaviour, the truth is that the resources are not available to maintain a service at the same level across schools, and there will not be a change in the national statistics unless the same service is offered.

[17] **Suzy Davies:** Mae hynny'n **Suzy Davies:** That is interesting. Thank you. ddiddorol. Diolch.

[18] **Mr Healey:** I think that your question was about whether there are problems with the way in which issues have been dealt with so far. There are some rather perverse influences on schools. Schools are very heavily influenced by measures, such as banding, and so on, which have attendance built into them, which will cause schools not to feel as free to deal with issues in the best way for the whole school community as they ought to. I think that that needs

looking at.

[19] **Suzy Davies:** Can I just develop that one point? Do you think that, with regard to the point of control, the balance is wrong between local authorities and schools? Do you think that schools should have more control over what happens in them, or less? That is, on the evidence that you have seen of success stories, or otherwise.

[20] **Mr Healey:** I am a manager in a school, and I would say that schools should have more. However, I know colleagues at the chalk face in some schools—hopefully not mine—might have a different view in some cases.

[21] **Suzy Davies:** That is useful to know; thank you.

[22] **Mr Phillips:** On that question, I think that the balance needs to be there, but it needs to be weighed against the professional judgment of headteachers. For instance, if the headteacher or governing body of a school has decided to exclude a pupil permanently, as long as the correct procedures have been followed and the correct processes have taken place, and everybody has decided that exclusion is the right course of action, it ill behoves an independent appeals panel to overturn the decision, because that just places the disruption back into the school.

[23] There may be three strategies, but it is always the implementation of the strategies that is the issue, and it comes down to respecting the professional judgment of schools. Equally, however, there is a role for local authorities to play, because local authorities and Government have to ensure that alternative provision is available for children to go to.

[24] **Christine Chapman:** Rolant and David are next, and I know that other Members need to come in, after which we can move on.

[25] **Mr Evans:** I have a slight difference of opinion with Rex in what he just said. You have to have an appeals process, and by its nature, having an appeals process means that it could come out with a different result. I do understand and agree with what he was saying with regard to following procedures. However, the difficulties arise—certainly in the cases that our members contact us about—when they feel that they have not been supported properly by the local authority. They feel that undue pressure has been placed on them, and that is unacceptable. It causes a lot of angst for our members.

[26] **Mr Wynne:** Byddai gennym bryder pe bai mwy o adnoddau'n mynd i ysgolion—iawn, byddai'r ysgolion mawr efallai yn gallu delio â'r sefyllfa, ond mae carfan fawr o'n haelodau yn gweithio mewn ysgolion bach gwledig, ac nid oes ganddynt yr adnoddau na'r arbenigedd i ddelio â'r sefyllfa. Maent yn cysylltu â ni am eu bod wedi cyrraedd pwynt argyfwng. Mae gan awdurdodau lleol staff arbenigol iawn, ond mae'r ddarpariaeth yn denau—hynny yw, mae un neu ddau ar y mwyaf mewn rhai awdurdodau—felly nid yw'r gwasanaeth ar gael. Mae angen y gwasanaeth hwnnw ar frys pan fydd argyfwng yn codi. Felly, byddem yn awyddus i weld y gwasanaeth yn cael ei ganoli ar lefel llywodraeth leol neu yn rhanbarthol o leiaf, fel bod y gwasanaeth arbenigol hwn ar gael

Mr Wynne: We would be concerned if more resources went to schools—yes, the larger schools would be able to cope with the situation, but a large proportion of our members work in small rural schools, and they have neither the resources nor the expertise to deal with the situation. They contact us because they have reached crisis point. Local authorities have highly specialised staff, but provision is thin on the ground—that is, there may be no more than one or two in some authorities—which means that the service is unavailable. That service is needed immediately when an emergency arises. So, we would be keen to see the service centralised at local government level or at a regional level at the least, so that this specialised service would be available to

ar frys i ysgolion pan fo argyfwng.

schools without delay should emergencies arise.

[27] **Aled Roberts:** Mae gennyf gwestiwn ar y ffaith bod prosiectau sy'n llwyddiannus, heb fod yr adnoddau ar gael i'w lledu drwy'r cynghorau. A ydych yn sôn am brosiectau cenedlaethol neu brosiectau o fewn awdurdodau lleol?

Aled Roberts: I have a question on the fact that there are successful projects, without there being resources available to spread across councils. Are you talking about national projects or projects within local authorities?

[28] **Mr Wynne:** Rhof enghraifft ichi. Fel pennaeth yn y gogledd, a chyda'r brifysgol ym Mangor, daethom i mewn i raglen y Blynnyddoedd Rhyfeddol oherwydd ein bod ni ar garreg ei drws, ond nid wyf yn hollol siŵr o ble'r oedd yr arian yn dod i'r hymchwil—arian loteri, rwy'n credu, a pheth gan y Llywodraeth. Roedd cyfuniad o adnoddau. Rwy'n gwybod bod un neu ddau awdurdod yn y gogledd wedi bod yn gweithio ar brosiectau amlasiantaethol, a chredaf fod cyfuniad o arian o'r canol ac arian lleol wedi cael ei roi yn y pot i drïo gwaith gwahanol i ddelio â phresenoldeb.

Mr Wynne: I will give you an example. As a headteacher in the north, and with the university in Bangor, we entered into the Incredible Years programme because we were on its doorstep, but I am not entirely sure where the funding came from for that research—I believe that it was lottery funding, with some from the Government. It was a combination of resources. I know that one or two authorities in north Wales have been working on multi-agency projects, and I believe that a combination of central funding and local funding was put into the pot to try different ways of working to deal with attendance.

[29] **Aled Roberts:** Os yw'r prosiect yn llwyddiant a'r arian heb fod ar gael iddo gael ei datblygu yn ehangach, beth yw'r pwrpas?

Aled Roberts: If the project is a success, but the money is not available to develop it more widely, what is the point?

9.30 a.m.

[30] **Mr Healey:** I will refer back to something that Rex said earlier. David was quite right in saying that it is important that there is a mechanism for correcting erroneous decisions; that is the appeals process. However, what Rex said about putting the disruption back into the school is absolutely right. It is actually worse than Rex made out, because in doing that, it is known that the child was excluded. Therefore, you are undermining the school, as well as putting the disruption back. Exclusion is nearly always a disaster for the child involved, but it is not necessarily a disaster for the school. Schools have to think about the wider school community. By and large, I think that we are all referring at the moment to mainstream schools, where the staff are not generally well trained in dealing with the extreme cases that they are being faced with now.

[31] **Christine Chapman:** We will be coming back to that later. We will go to Jenny and then Julie.

[32] **Jenny Rathbone:** I want to pick up on this point. Is it not really down to the quality of the behaviour management strategy and whether it is being delivered consistently across the school? That is down to leadership. If you have teachers making it up as they go along, then you will not get the consistency of the behaviour from the individual. There have to be all manner of strategies in place, including time out et cetera, to enable the school to raise the game. I have seen behaviour improve dramatically because of new leadership in the school. Ultimately, it has to be down to good leadership and good teaching.

[33] **Mr Phillips:** I do not think that you will get an argument from us on that. I think that

that is absolutely correct. As I said at the start, it is about the fair and equitable application of whatever procedures you have. Teachers have to have confidence that the procedures are going to be applied fairly and that allowances are not going to be made for some pupils and not others. There will always be circumstances where you have to look at that, but if the procedures are not seen to be applied fairly and if some children are seen to be able to do things that others cannot, then there will be a problem. So, I would agree with you that it does come down to that. It also comes down to the trust in the teacher in the classroom. Equally, teachers in the classroom need to be able to trust in the fact that, where they highlight a problem and they ask for support on that problem, that support is given and you do not enter into one of these revolving-door situations, which teachers often experience in terms of some of the behaviour policies in schools. So, we believe quite firmly that you need effective behaviour management policies that work and that are applied fairly. We agree with that.

[34] **Jenny Rathbone:** I want to pick up on a point that David made earlier about the link between attendance and banding. Could you expand on that? I would be interested to know exactly what you were referring to.

[35] **Mr Healey:** Schools find themselves in a position where they are being measured on their attendance. Attendance is something that they have very few direct powers over. There are things that they can do, like making the curriculum more attractive, and so on, but when it comes to the bottom line and action needs to be taken against parents, it is not schools that have those powers. They rely on local authorities, which, by and large, are very reluctant to use them.

[36] **Jenny Rathbone:** I have known headteachers to go out and get the child.

[37] **Mr Healey:** Yes. Education welfare officers have that as part of their role.

[38] **Julie Morgan:** Following that up, I would challenge the view that there was nothing that the school itself could do. I would have thought that there was a lot in terms of school-home liaison that could be done in order to tackle attendance.

[39] I understand what Rex said about taking the disruption back into the school and I think that David also supported that idea. Things have to be fair. However, how can you explain the differing rates of exclusions between different schools and local authorities? You say that some schools never exclude anybody and others do. Could you explain that?

[40] **Mr Phillips:** My view is that some authorities tend to put pressure on schools not to exclude because of the setting of exclusion targets. I do not think that you should have targets on exclusions—to reduce exclusions or to increase them. I do not think that anyone would want to accept a target to increase them, but I do not think that you should have the target. The exclusion should be used where it is necessary to provide the form of education that the child who is excluded needs and where it assists in the education of the children who are in the main stream. So, it should be based on need, not just on some target-driven process. One of the concerns that we have is that local authorities put pressure on, which is why you get the disparities between some local authorities and schools. Some local authorities put pressure on, because they know that they do not have the facilities to deal with the children who are excluded. So, rather than having to provide the alternative, they put the problem back into the school, and that will skew your figures, obviously.

[41] **Julie Morgan:** So, would you say that you explain the different rates by the local authority's attitude?

[42] **Mr Phillips:** There are different approaches, but it is not only about the local authority's attitude, but the attitude of management in schools. Some managers are reluctant

to exclude. In extreme circumstances, we have to go into schools and ballot our members on refusal to teach pupils because we do not believe that the school has operated correctly in dealing with the problem that has occurred, or it has gone through the process where the school has excluded a pupil and then an independent appeal panel has overturned that decision. I am not saying that we should not have independent appeal panels, but the rules of engagement of those panels should be much more rigid, and they should look at the judgment of the school and the professionals within the school, rather than just looking at putting the child back in. If the process has not been followed, that is a good reason for putting a child back in, but if the process has been followed, and it is the judgment of the school and the governing body that the exclusion should stand, I think that it is down to appeal panels to overturn the decision.

[43] **Mr Evans:** A lot of that comes back to the question that Jenny asked with regard to leadership. There is a huge issue here with regard to leadership within the schools, and there are different perceptions as to how best to deal with behavioural problems. Some managers operate almost a zero-tolerance policy, others will try other strategies and others would bend to the potential whim of the local authority and bow to the pressure to keep the children there. That could lead to a whole range of different results. You could say that the headteacher who operates almost a zero-tolerance policy is protecting the other children in the school, who have the right to an education, which would be disturbed by this disruptive behaviour. It could be that other headteachers, by operating different policies, are dealing with the problem in a slightly different way. So, it is a whole mix, and it then comes back to the training of the leadership team and making sure that they understand the strategies.

[44] In all our submissions, I think that we have all referred to the training courses that we provide for our members, certainly at newly-qualified teacher and young-teacher level. In fact, we operated one last weekend. They are the courses that attract the most interest and have the highest attendance level of the courses and conferences that we hold. We look to extend it to people who are later in their careers as well. However, local authorities could do more to provide training for those at senior management level.

[45] **Christine Chapman:** We will come on to the issue of training of teachers later. I need to move on now. Bethan, would you like to ask any questions?

[46] **Bethan Jenkins:** Hoffwn. Sylwais o ddarllen eich tystiolaeth nad ydych o blaid fframwaith cenedlaethol ar gyfer gwahardd disgyblion a'ch bod yn credu y dylid cael hyblygrwydd mewn systemau ysgolion er mwyn i dimau rheoli allu penderfynu pa strategaethau fyddai'n dda ar gyfer achosion unigol. Ydych chi'n credu, fel y dywedodd yr Athro Reid wythnos diwethaf, bod symud disgyblion o ysgol i ysgol nifer o weithiau yn gallu bod yn anghyfreithlon oherwydd y ffaith ei fod yn answyddogol—yn hytrach na bod y disgybl yn cael ei wahardd am yr hyn y mae wedi ei wneud—ac maent yn cael eu symud o un ysgol i'r llall yn y system, yn hytrach na'u bod yn cael eu cosbi neu eu rhoi i mewn i uned arbenigol? Mae NUT wedi dweud nad oes digon o dystiolaeth i ddangos bod hyn yn digwydd. Byddai'n ddiddorol pe gallech ehangu ar hynny.

Bethan Jenkins: Yes. I noticed from your evidence that you are not in favour of a national framework for excluding pupils and that you believe that there should be flexibility within school systems for management teams to decide what strategy would be best in individual cases. Do you believe, as Professor Reid said last week, that moving pupils many times between schools can be illegal, because it is unofficial—rather than excluding the pupil for what they have done—and they are moved from school to school within the system rather than being punished or put into a specialist unit? The NUT says that there is insufficient evidence to say that that happens. It would be interesting if you could expand on that.

[47] **Mr Evans:** First and foremost, we stand by the fact that we think that there has to be flexibility within the system. No two schools are the same; no two communities are the same. Each cohort of pupils can be different as well with regard to behavioural standards, so we have to have that flexibility within schools.

[48] With regard to unofficial exclusions or moving pupils on illegally, the evidence that has come back to our office from our members suggests that these are few and far between: it is not the norm, as such. There are, on occasion, glaring examples of where it has happened and where it has possibly gone wrong, but we do not see any evidence of it being widespread across Wales. There are different tactics that local authorities, working with the schools, use to deal with issues around moving pupils from school to school. We have to find out what the correct route is for any individual pupil, who will have different problems. The problem is the problem—the problem is not necessarily the child. We have to look at the ways in which we deal with that. If you use a range of different strategies, you should come up with the best result for that child.

[49] **Mr Phillips:** First of all, I would like to thank Bethan for explaining what an illegal exclusion is, because when I read the paper I did not understand it. I think that I understand it now but I do not see that there is anything illegal about what is taking place there. In fact, it is part of the strategies that we would suggest. If there was a problem with a child in one school, and certainly in an extreme situation where we were refusing to teach that child, we would not say that our members in another school will not teach that child. The child deserves a second chance. If the only way of dealing with it is to place the child in another school, I cannot see how that could possibly be considered an illegal exclusion because they are not excluded from the system. It is a strategy that would be used to make sure that the child is provided with the education to which he or she is entitled. Whether putting them in another mainstream school is the correct approach is another matter, but an assessment needs to be made of their needs at the time of their exclusion and then a decision should be made on what provision is appropriate. That might not be in another school—it might be in a pupil referral unit or a special school—but that comes back to the point that Aled made, in that if the resource is there, there is a need to ensure that the provision is there to place the child appropriately.

[50] **Bethan Jenkins:** What Professor Reid was saying, if I am correct—and I am not a specialist, so correct me if I am wrong—was that it would skew the figures if they were moving the pupils over, which would reflect differently in the data, so that is why he was saying that it was tantamount to illegal exclusions. I think that that is what he meant; it is not my opinion.

[51] **Mr Phillips:** That might be the case but I would suggest that he has perhaps misunderstood the idea of exclusion. With the greatest respect to him, I do not see how moving a child from one school to another could possibly constitute an illegal exclusion. He needs to go back and have a look at that. Also, the way in which the data are collected may be a problem.

[52] **Christine Chapman:** I will bring David in and then we have to move on to another area, because we have a lot to cover today.

[53] **Mr Healey:** Your question seems to suggest that there is some sort of an under-the-counter process going on between schools to move a child before they become an exclusion statistic. I am not aware of anything like that, but in the sorts of schools that Jenny was describing, which have strong, clear and well-understood discipline policies, I have known parents see the writing on the wall and opt to move their child before they get it on their record that they are an excluded child. Once they are a permanently excluded child, it becomes much more difficult to find a school that is willing to take them, so it is better for all concerned in many cases. I am not aware of an under-the-counter process whereby schools

are doing deals—it is the parents who drive that.

[54] **Mr Wynne:** Ni fyddwn yn dweud bod gennym dystiolaeth o eithrio pobl yn anghyfreithlon. Oes, mae symudiadau wedi'u rheoli a phan maent wedi'u rheoli'n dda, maent yn llwyddiannus iawn, cyn belled ag y bod yr asiantaethau sy'n cefnogi'r ysgolion a'r swyddogion lles addysg yn rhan o'r broses. Byddwn i'n cytuno â David mai'r hyn sy'n tueddu i ddigwydd yw bod rhieni'n gweld bod cyfarfodydd yn cael eu cynnal, lle mae rhywun yn dweud wrthynt o dan ba amodau y mae eu plant yn cael mynychu'r ysgol, ac mae rhieni'n dewis symud eu plant i ysgol arall.

Mr Wynne: I would not say that we have evidence of illegal exclusions. Yes, there are controlled movements and when they are managed well, they are very successful, as long as the agencies that support the schools and education welfare officers are part of the process. I would agree with David that what tends to happen is that parents see that meetings are being held, where they are told under what conditions their children can attend the school, and parents choose to move their children to another school.

9.45 a.m.

[55] Nid yw hynny'n anghyfreithlon. Mewn ysgol sydd â threfniadaeth gref ac mae disgwyl i blant a'u rhieni i gydymffurfio â hynny ac nad ydynt yn fodlon gwneud, dewis y rhieni ydyw, yn aml iawn, i symud eu plant i ysgol arall.

That is not illegal. In a school that has strict procedures with which children and their parents are expected to comply and they are not willing to do so, it is often the parents' choice to move their children to another school.

[56] **Rebecca Evans:** We have heard evidence of a lack of provision for pupils educated otherwise than at school. I was going to ask what impact this has on managing behaviour within mainstream settings; I think that you have covered that, but I invite any further comments you would like to make on that. Also, you will be aware of the Welsh Government's educated otherwise than at school action plan, which was published in August 2011, I would like your views on the 17 recommendations in that plan; do you think that they are the right recommendations and are you satisfied with the progress towards achieving them so far?

[57] **Mr Wynne:** A dweud y gwir, ychydig o brofiad uniongyrchol sydd gen i o hyn. Mae'r sefyllfa'n dod lle na fydd blentyn yn gallu aros mewn unrhyw ysgol briflif, felly bydd yn rhaid cael darpariaeth y tu allan i briflif ar eu cyfer. Mae'n bwysig bod y ddarpariaeth hynny'n gynhwysfawr ac yn cynnwys darpariaeth bont yn ei gwricwlwm academaidd; yn aml, mae angen ar y disgyblion hyn hyfforddiant i'w paratoi ar gyfer y byd gwaith yn nes ymlaen. Felly, mae angen i'r cwricwlwm sy'n cael ei gynnig iddynt fod yn addas i'w hanghenion addysgol a chymdeithasol.

Mr Wynne: To be honest, I have little direct experience of that. The situation comes where a pupil cannot stay in any mainstream school, so there has to be provision for them outside of the main stream. It is important that that provision is comprehensive and includes a bridging provision in its academic curriculum; often, these pupils need training to prepare them for the world of work later on. Therefore, the curriculum that is offered to them needs to be appropriate for their educational and social needs.

[58] **Mr Phillips:** We made reference to the Welsh Government's efforts and we recognise those in terms of education otherwise than at school. There are efforts being made; whether enough is being done will be determined by others, in many respects. All that we can do is look at the situation in terms of how it is impacting on schools, and whether pupils' needs are being met; that is the acid test. It is being developed and will need time to bed-in,

but it also needs to be resourced appropriately.

[59] **Mr Evans:** Without having the 17 recommendations at my fingertips at the moment, the only comment I will make is that when the plan came out, we discussed it within our Wales committee and I do not think that any significant difficulties or problems were raised with regard to those recommendations. It is a difficult area within a system that is stretched and you have to have that in-built flexibility. I think that that plan provides that.

[60] **Mr Healey:** I think that it was Rex who referred to the trend in local authorities to close pupil referral units and move very difficult children into the main stream. I do not have the 17 recommendations in my head, either. However, there is an issue with home-educated children. If we believe that all children should be educated to a standard; how is it that we are not monitoring home education?

[61] **Rebecca Evans:** On a different issue, what are your thoughts on the role that outdoor learning can play in improving behaviour and attendance in mainstream schools?

[62] **Mr Phillips:** I think that outdoor education plays a major part. As a teacher who meets ex-pupils, who, perhaps, were not very well-behaved when they were in school, what they do remember are the experiences that they had when they went to outdoor study centres and the challenges that they faced in that sort of environment. Regrettably, we saw the demise of outdoor study centres across Wales. There was a superb centre in Nottage in Porthcawl, where we regularly took pupils and they got a tremendous amount out of that. I do not know whether you call it an education in itself, in the broad terms of education, but it was an experience and, for some, it was a very valuable one because of the nature of the activities in which they were involved. I value that very much as someone who was a practitioner in that field when I was teaching. It encourages teamwork and so much else. So, it is something that needs to be considered and developed more, but we have seen that kind of provision deteriorate, rather than increase over the years.

[63] **Mr Evans:** Being a native of Porthcawl, I remember that outdoor pursuit centre very well. There is now a nice housing estate where it was. I agree with what Rex said. In fact, I wish that the housing estate was not there and that that outdoor pursuit centre remained. It is something that we should look at and see what we can do to get back to it.

[64] **Christine Chapman:** I will move on, because I am conscious that we have only about 25 minutes and I know that a lot of Members want to come in on other areas, if you are content with that. I see that you are. Jenny, I think that you wanted to come in next.

[65] **Jenny Rathbone:** To return to these parents who move their children when they see the way that the wind is blowing, I do not doubt that there are many families out there who have a PhD in avoiding authority, but that is where the important role of the education welfare officer comes in, because the headteachers and the teachers cannot be out and about finding out what is happening in families. So, I want to hear a little more about the shortage of EWOs that both ATL and NASWUT have mentioned. What can you tell us about whether that is the case across Wales or in particular schools, its impact on your members and the difficulty or ease with which they can liaise with EWOs so that they are working as part of a team?

[66] **Mr Healey:** I cannot speak for the whole of Wales, but I know what the situation is in my neck of the woods. There is a greater demand for the services of EWOs—visiting homes in the community, working with parents, phasing children's return back into school when they have had periods of long absences, for whatever reason, and working with pastoral staff within the school as well—than is met by the number of EWOs that we have.

[67] **Jenny Rathbone:** We will ask the headteachers why they have allowed that situation

to develop, but do any of the others want to talk about this? What is a good EWO service in your members' minds?

[68] **Mr Wynne:** Mae dwy rôl gan y swyddog lles addysg. Un yw ymateb i argyfwng, felly mae angen i chi gael rhywun rydych yn gallu galw arnynt pan ydych yn gwybod bod sefyllfa o fewn teulu wedi cyrraedd rhyw fath o argyfwng. Yn fy mhrofiad i, mae ganddynt gyswllt uniongyrchol gyda gwasanaethau cymdeithasol, ac felly mae tîm yn gallu gweithio o gwmpas y teulu hwnnw i geisio datrys problemau yn y tymor byr, lle bydd plant mewn perygl neu yn cael eu cymryd i ofal, efallai. Felly, mae ganddynt rôl hanfodol o fod yn gyswllt rhwng yr ysgol a'r gwasanaethau eraill.

Mr Wynne: An education welfare officer has two roles. One is to respond to emergencies, so you need someone on whom you can call when you know that a situation within a family has reached a crisis point. In my experience, they have a direct link with social services, and so a team can work around that family to try to resolve short-term situations, where children may be at risk or taken into care. Therefore, they play an essential role as a link between the school and the other services.

[69] Fodd bynnag, mae ganddynt hefyd rôl ragweithiol. Hynny yw, pan fo rhywun yn dadansoddi ystadegau presenoldeb, mae rhywun yn gweld patrwm yn dechrau codi gydag ambell i deulu. Felly, mae gennych rywun y gallwch droi atynt yn rheolaidd a dweud 'Mae yna batrwm yn y fan yma. Mae dwy neu dair wythnos o golli dydd Gwener neu o fod yn hwyr yn cyrraedd'. Gall y swyddog lles addysg wedyn gysylltu â'r teulu hwnnw a dechrau sicrhau nad yw sefyllfa sydd yn dechrau llithro yn dwysáu. Dyna pam bod angen digon o bobl fel hyn ar lawr gwlad, fel eu bod yn gallu ymyryd mewn sefyllfaoedd a allai waethygu.

However, they also have a proactive role. That is, when you analyse attendance figures, you see patterns emerging with some families. So, you have someone whom you can turn to regularly and point out 'There is a pattern here. For two or three weeks, they have not been going to school on Fridays or have been arriving late'. The education welfare officer can then get in touch with that family and start to make sure that a situation that is starting to slip does not get any worse. That is why we need enough of these officers on the ground, so that they can intervene in situations that could deteriorate.

[70] Mae tuedd iddynt weithio yn fwyfwy mewn ysgolion uwchradd oherwydd eu maint ac ati, ond os gallant sefydlu cyswllt â theuluoedd pan fo'r plant yn ifanc, mae hynny'n debygol o leihau'r absenoldebau pan fo'r plant yn hŷn drwy sicrhau nad oes patrwm o absenoldebau yn datblygu yn gynnar yn addysg plant.

There is a tendency for them to work increasingly in secondary schools, because of their size and so on, but if they can establish links with families when the children are young, that is likely to reduce absences when the children are older by ensuring that a pattern of absences does not develop early on in children's education.

[71] **Christine Chapman:** Jenny, before you come back in, I have Aled first.

[72] **Aled Roberts:** A oes problem yn y fan hon achos bod y ganran o'r arian sy'n cael ei reoli gan yr ysgolion yn cynyddu, felly mae gwasanaethau canolog mewn meysydd fel lles addysg yn mynd i ddiodef ac nid yw'r ysgolion yn barod i dalu am y gwasanaeth hwn?

Aled Roberts: Is there a problem here because the percentage of the funding that is controlled by the schools is increasing, so the central services in areas such as education welfare will suffer and the schools are not willing to pay for this service?

[73] **Mr Wynne:** Yn sicr, mae hynny'n

Mr Wynne: That is certainly true in small

wir mewn ysgolion bach. Nid oes ganddynt y cyllid i brynu'r math hwnnw o waith. Felly, byddem ni'n dweud y dylai'r gwasanaeth hwn gael ei ganoli o fewn awdurdodau.

schools. They do not have the budget to buy in that kind of service. Therefore, we would say that this service should be centralised within authorities.

[74] **Aled Roberts:** Fodd bynnag, mae problem wrth i ganran yr arian sy'n mynd at ysgolion gynyddu i 85% ac mae cwestiwn ynglŷn â faint mae awdurdodau lleol yn gallu ei wneud gyda 15%.

Aled Roberts: However, there is a problem with the percentage of the funding going to schools increasing to 85%, and there is a question about how much local authorities can do with 15%.

[75] **Simon Thomas:** Mae gennyf gwestiwn dilynol yn benodol ar hynny. A yw'r gwasanaeth lles hwn yn cael ei gynnal gan y 22 awdurdod sydd gennym neu gan y rhanbarthau erbyn hyn? Sut mae hynny yn delio â'r gwahaniaeth hwn yn y llif arian?

Simon Thomas: This is a follow-up question specifically on that. Is this welfare service provided by all 22 authorities or has it been regionalised yet? How does that deal with this difference in the funding stream?

[76] **Mr Evans:** Yng Ngwynedd, maent yn cael eu penodi gan y cyngor sir.

Mr Evans: In Gwynedd, they are appointed by the county council.

[77] **Simon Thomas:** Gan y cyngor sir lleol?

Simon Thomas: By the local county council?

[78] **Mr Evans:** Ie.

Mr Evans: Yes.

[79] **Simon Thomas:** A yw hynny'n wir dros Gymru ar hyn o bryd?

Simon Thomas: Is that true across Wales at present?

[80] **Mr Phillips:** I do not think that they have been regionalised across Wales; I do not think that they have been brought into the consortia. I am not altogether sure, I have to say, but I do not think that they have. The numbers of education welfare officers have been reduced. That is anecdotal because it is the view that we get expressed. I think that you raise a very important point about the move to an 85% delegation rate. It is something that we, as a trade union, are not particularly keen on because we believe that you do need to retain money centrally to provide the central services. Schools cannot provide the service and, in my view, should not be providing the services that EWOs provide. It comes down to economies of scale, and it goes to the heart of the debate that we currently have on the structure and where local authorities lie within that structure. The general consensus, I think, is that 22 are probably too many, but it is a matter of what you put in their place. Clearly, what you put in their place should not be greater autonomy for schools and increased delegation for schools because you need to retain the central services. If you do not do that, you will not have EWOs or the provision.

[81] On another approach, we have seen the demise of the behaviour management services in local authorities. Newport was a classic example, which had a very good behaviour management service that could be targeted to need in schools. It then decided that it would delegate the funding out to schools and the behaviour management service was curtailed and people lost their jobs and were made redundant. There were some excellent practitioners in there— excellent people who could deliver on behaviour management around schools—and now those people have had to set up, more or less, in private practice.

[82] By just saying that you will increase delegation rates, you are taking the focus away from what needs to be provided centrally by local authorities. That is at the heart of the debate. To just say '85% delegation' is very easy and, in some respects, you can achieve that

by just farming things out to schools that were provided for centrally. It looks good on paper, but sometimes the money goes out and sometimes it comes straight in. Again, I do not think that it is a very scientific way of looking at what we need to do in terms of education in Wales.

[83] **Christine Chapman:** I will allow one final comment from David Healey.

[84] **Mr Healey:** Sometimes, delegation is artificial anyway because you are putting the money into the school, but the only place the school can realistically buy the service from is the local authority; so, it goes backwards and forwards. There is a fundamental question behind all this and that is, 'What are schools for?' Years ago, schools were to do with education and social ills were dealt with by social services. However, more and more, schools are being expected to get involved in the counselling service and the EWO service, the nurses are in there, and they are handing out contraception. All sorts of things are going on in schools now that are to do with social problems in the community, rather than sticking to education. That fundamental question needs to be sorted out first. Obviously, all of these things have an impact on the child's ability to learn because all of these things are affecting their psychological state and so on, but is that what we want our education budget to be funding?

[85] **Christine Chapman:** I know that Julie Morgan has questions on this shortly. I am very conscious of time, so, I hope to get to those. However, Jenny, did you want to come in on this?

[86] **Jenny Rathbone:** Yes, I just want to look at how well school communities are managing the issue of exclusions collectively. What can happen is that school A likes to think, 'We do not have room for these sorts of pupils in our school, so we exclude them', and then pupils disproportionately end up in one or two schools with major behavioural, emotional and social problems, and the local authority is simply not managing it. I want to hear your views on that scenario. We heard very clearly from our witness last time that that was happening in my own authority of Cardiff.

[87] **Mr Healey:** In extremis what can happen is that, just because of its catchment, a school becomes very successful, possibly academically, or it earns a very good reputation for its discipline policy or whatever, and it becomes attractive to parents, and if that school reaches the point where it cannot take any more pupils because of the size of the buildings and health and safety considerations, the local authority cannot put any more children in that school. It would not be safe to do so. There are schools that have reached that limit and can quite legitimately—for good, sound reasons—refuse to take further children. However, because of the marketplace, where there is competition between schools, that will be a tendency. It would be far better, as I think we would all agree, if we could make it so that all schools were of an equally good standard, so that that sort of thing did not happen and people would naturally go to the local school.

10.00 a.m.

[88] **Jenny Rathbone:** Are you aware of any local authorities operating a system whereby if you exclude one, you take another one in?

[89] **Mr Phillips:** No. There is a short answer to that one.

[90] **Jenny Rathbone:** It is certainly something that is operated in London. I think that this problem is perhaps more acute in London.

[91] **Mr Healey:** In Gwynedd, where I am, I am not aware of a policy of doing that, but

there is a sort of moral code between the heads, perhaps, that there should be a two-way flow of exclusions.

[92] **Jenny Rathbone:** So, it is operated informally, you are saying.

[93] **Mr Healey:** Yes.

[94] **Christine Chapman:** Do you have any other questions, Jenny? I see that you do not. Let us move on to Aled.

[95] **Aled Roberts:** Gan symud at hyfforddiant athrawon, mae pob un ohonoch wedi nodi bod gwaith i'w wneud yn y maes hwnnw. A sôn am y cynllun hyfforddi diwygiedig a gyhoeddwyd gan Lywodraeth Cymru yn 2011, beth yw eich barn am y cynlluniau sydd wedi eu gosod allan yn y cynllun hwnnw?

Aled Roberts: Moving on to teacher training, you have all noted that there is work to be done in this field. If I can talk about the reformed training programme that was published by the Welsh Government in 2011, what are your opinions on the schemes that were set out within that broader scheme?

[96] **Mr Wynne:** Yn sicr, mae angen mewnbwn sylweddol yn yr hyfforddiant cychwynnol ar gyfer rheolaeth dosbarth o ddydd i ddydd. Mae dau beth. Mewn llawer o ysgolion bellach, mae'r athrawon yn cael eu hyfforddi o dan gynllun partneriaeth, gyda'r myfyrwyr yn treulio cyfnod sylweddol mewn ysgolion ac ati. Maent efallai yn cael eu cyflwyno i fframwaith disgyblaeth yr ysgolion hynny. Fodd bynnag, pan fyddant yn mynd i'r proffesiwn, byddant efallai yn dysgu mewn ysgol wahanol, felly mae angen rhyw fath o gyflwyniad cyffredinol i arfer da ar lawr dosbarth o ran rheolaeth dosbarth. Wrth gwrs, mae angen hefyd eu cyflwyno i gynlluniau disgyblaeth a rheolaeth ymddygiad yn yr ysgolion y byddant yn treulio tymor neu fwy ynddynt.

Mr Wynne: Certainly, there has to be a substantial input into the initial training on everyday classroom management. There are two things. In many schools now, teachers are trained under a partnership scheme, in which the students spend a significant amount of time in schools and so on. They are perhaps introduced to the disciplinary framework in those schools. However, when they go into the profession, they may be teaching at a different school, so there needs to be some kind of general introduction to good practice in the classroom on classroom management. Of course, they also need to be introduced to the discipline and behaviour management policies in those schools where they are to spend a term or longer.

[97] Mae'n bwysig bod staff yn cael hyfforddiant cadarn ar y cychwyn ynglŷn ag ymddygiad cyffredinol. Mae achosion eithafol, wrth gwrs, ac mae'n rhaid iddynt gael hyfforddiant arbenigol, ac yr ydym wedi cyfeirio at hynny.

It is important that staff receive solid initial training on general behaviour. There are extreme cases, of course, for which they will need specialist training, and we have referred to that.

[98] Mae'n bwysig hyfforddi pobl sy'n dod mewn i'r proffesiwn, ond mae angen hyfforddi staff ysgol gyfan. Yn hynny o beth, yr ydym yn dechrau sôn am reolaeth ac arweinyddiaeth mewn ysgol. Un o'r pethau pwysicaf y mae pennaeth yn ei wneud, efallai, yw cael pawb ar y staff yn gweithio o fewn yr un fframwaith. Mae hynny yr un mor bwysig ag y mae hyfforddi'r rhai sy'n dod mewn i'r proffesiwn.

It is important to train people entering the profession, but there also needs to be training for all the staff at a school. In that respect, we are starting to talk about management and leadership in schools. One of the most important things that a headteacher can do, perhaps, is to get all the staff working within the same framework. That is just as important as training those entering the profession.

[99] **Mr Healey:** I think that the best indicator of the success of training is, as David said earlier, that our most popular courses within the union are behaviour management courses. They are most popular of all with the younger staff. It is lion taming, is it not? There is one teacher to 30 kids, and you have to convince them that you are in control. You cannot start teaching until you have their attention, so it is absolutely crucial to good teaching that behaviour management is sound for every individual teacher, as well as across the school as a whole. The fact that there is such demand for additional behaviour management training is an indicator of where we stand at the moment.

[100] There has been a trend in schools as well—we have referred to it a little already—of changing the intake of schools over time. When I trained, there were many more pupil referral units and other types of institutions for special needs children and for behaviourally challenging children. Most of those children are now in the main stream. It is no fault of the trainers who trained me, but they did not anticipate the sort of children that I come across now when I received that training during my initial teacher training.

[101] **Mr Phillips:** I think that that is a fair point. We did see a ray of hope in this, actually, because we set up a seminar for newly qualified teachers some time ago, and part of that included a behaviour management session in the afternoon—it is a shortened version of the course that we then developed for teachers, similar to the courses that others run. In the early years, it was quite clear that the newly qualified teachers that were coming out had not had any instruction in terms of behaviour management while they were at their training colleges. Over the last two years, I have seen a significant change in that, and when the behaviour management specialists come in and talk to them about it, and they ask them questions, it is clear that something has changed in terms of initial teacher training, because their knowledge of the kinds of strategies that they can use is far greater than it was previously.

[102] As has been said, this is not only a matter for newly qualified teachers. I spent 30 years working at a school and, by the time that my career ended at that school, I do not think that I had any disciplinary problems at all, but then I went to another school in Cardiff and it was like starting out all over again, because the relationship that I had built with the pupils, parents and so on at the previous school was not there, and I had to start all over again. So, it is not something that you just have and can take into a job; it is something that does depend on the relationship that you have with your pupils. Sadly, the kind of relationship that you can have with your pupils nowadays has to be very distant, because you cannot have the banter that you could perhaps have had in the past any longer, for fear of allegations being made against you. That is another issue that goes to the heart of where we are in this debate over behaviour and attendance.

[103] **Christine Chapman:** That was also in the paper that you provided.

[104] **Bethan Jenkins:** I ehangu ar y pwynt hwnnw, rwy'n deall eich bod yn dweud ei fod yn bwysig i bob athro gael yr hyfforddiant hwn, ond a oes enghreifftiau lle mae athrawon unigol yn cael hyfforddiant oherwydd bod ganddynt ddisgybl sy'n achosi problem o fewn eu dosbarth, ond nid yw'r hyfforddiant hwnnw yn cael ei adlewyrchu'r drwy'r ysgol gyfan? A oes enghreifftiau lle mae pobl yn dweud, 'Dylech allu ymdrin â'r sefyllfa hon oherwydd eich bod wedi cael hyfforddiant yn y gorffennol', er bod yr athrawon hynny yn gofyn am fwy o help nag

Bethan Jenkins: To expand on that point, I understand that you say that it is important for every teacher to receive this training, but are there examples where individual teachers are given the training because they have a problematic pupil in their classroom, but that that training is not reflected throughout the whole school? Are there examples where people say, 'You should be able to cope with this situation because you have had training in the past', although those teachers are asking for more help than they think that they are getting from those managing the school?

maent yn meddwl eu bod yn ei gael gan y rhai sy'n rheoli'r ysgol?

[105] **Mr Wynne:** Gallaf siarad o brofiad fel un a fu'n brifathro am 25 mlynedd, lle mewn cyfnod o ddwy flynedd bu'n rhaid i mi eithrio. Yn yr un cyfnod, fel y soniodd Jenny, roedd yr ysgol yn cael canmoliaeth uchel gan Estyn am ei pholisi disgyblaeth a'i threfniadaeth. Daeth dau ddisgybl i'r ysgol oedd y tu hwnt i bob rheolaeth, ac roeddem yn crefu am hyfforddiant. Roeddem eisiau hyfforddiant penodol i staff y dosbarth a hefyd i mi fel pennaeth, oherwydd roedd y plentyn yn taro allan ac roedd yn rhaid defnyddio grym rhesymol. Nid oedd neb yn fodlon rhoi arweiniad i mi fel pennaeth ynglŷn â sut i ddefnyddio grym rhesymol efo'r plentyn hwnnw, i'r pwynt lle roedd yn rhaid i mi ei ddiarddel. Dyna'r unig bryd y gwnaeth pobl sylweddoli bod angen hyfforddiant arnom. Os ydych yn gwybod y bydd plentyn yn eich ysgol sy'n mynd i fod yn cicio staff a phlant eraill ac yn malu pethau, mae'n rhaid i'r staff sy'n delio efo nhw wybod beth i'w wneud. Medrwch sefyll rhwng plentyn a phlentyn arall neu rhwng plentyn a chyfrifiadur, ond mae pwynt yn dod lle mae eich diogelwch fel aelod unigol o staff yn gorfod cymryd blaenoriaeth. Buom yn crefu ar y sir a'r Cynulliad am arweiniad, ond nid oedd neb eisiau cydnabod bod y broblem yn bod, oherwydd unwaith y byddai rhywun yn cydnabod hynny, byddai atebolrwydd—byddai'n achos o ddweud, 'Os ydym yn eich hyfforddi chi sut i ddelio â'r plentyn hwn sy'n ymosodol, rydym yn derbyn eich bod mewn perygl, felly fel cyflogwr rydym yn rhoi ein hunain mewn sefyllfa'. Dyna yw realiti'r sefyllfa, a byddem yn dweud fel undeb fod angen arweiniad clir o'r canol mewn sefyllfaoedd lle mae plant ac athrawon mewn perygl sy'n dweud, 'Dyma beth ddylech ei wneud a dyma yw'r gefnogaeth sydd ar gael'. Ni ddylai cyllid ysgol neu gyllid sir ddod mewn i'r peth—mae'n angen sylfaenol o ran diogelwch.

[106] **Aled Roberts:** Cawsom dystiolaeth yng nghyfarfod yr wythnos diwethaf bod llawer iawn mwy o sylw yn cael ei roi wrth hyfforddi athrawon yn Lloegr i reoli ymddygiad na'r hyn sydd yn y cyrsiau yng Nghymru. A ydych yn ymwybodol fel undebau bod mwy o sylw yn cael ei roi i hyn

Mr Wynne: I can speak from experience as someone who was a headteacher for 25 years, where in a period of two years I had to exclude. During the same period, as Jenny mentioned, the school was highly praised by Estyn for its discipline policy and organisation. Two pupils came to the school who were beyond control, and we begged for training. We wanted specific training for classroom staff and also for me, as headteacher, because the child was striking out and we had to use reasonable force. No-one was willing to provide guidance to me as headteacher on how to use reasonable force with that child, to the point where I had to exclude him. It was only then that people realised that we needed training. If you know that a child in your school will be kicking staff and other children and breaking things, the staff dealing with them have to know what to do. You can stand between a pupil and another pupil, or between a pupil and a computer, but there comes a point where your safety as an individual member of staff has to take priority. We begged the county and the Assembly for guidance, but no-one wanted to acknowledge that the problem existed, because once someone had done so, there would be accountability—it would be a case of saying, 'If we train you in how to deal with this aggressive child, we accept that you are at risk, therefore as an employer we are placing ourselves in a situation'. That is the reality of the situation, and we would say as a union that clear guidance from the centre is needed in situations where children and teachers are at risk that says, 'This is what you should do and this is the support that is available'. The school budget or the county budget should not come into it—it is a fundamental question of safety.

Aled Roberts: We received evidence at last week's meeting that much more attention is given to behaviour management in teacher training courses in England than in Wales. As unions, are you aware that more attention is given to this in teacher training in England? In terms of professional development, is the

wrth hyfforddi athrawon yn Lloegr? O ran situation inequitable in that some counties
 datblygiad proffesiynol, a yw'r sefyllfa yn give training to teachers as part of their
 anghyfartal lle mae rhai siroedd yn rhoi professional development whereas others do
 hyfforddiant i athrawon fel rhan o'u not?
 datblygiad proffesiynol, ac eraill ddim yn
 gwneud?

[107] **Mr Healey:** 'Yes' is the answer to your last question; there is a range.

[108] **Mr Phillips:** I am not aware of the situation in England and whether they give better training in colleges in England.

[109] **Aled Roberts:** We were told that there is now a national requirement in England, and that there is a specific module relating to behaviour management in the initial teacher training programme in England.

[110] **Mr Phillips:** I would think that that would be a very good idea. As I said earlier, in part that seems to have been addressed in training colleges in Wales. Whether it is mandatory in Wales is another matter, but if it is not, we would support the view that it should be. One of the issues with the training that is provided is that it is training for how to deal with circumstances when they crop up, and how you have safe intervention when pupils are being violent and disruptive. Fortunately, these instances are few and far between; we do not want to play that up too much and say that it is happening all the time in our schools. However, that is where the training comes, rather than being about strategies that you can use so that you do not get into that situation in the first place. Going back to your question, Bethan, yes, there are instances where teachers have difficulties with classes, and they are provided with training, and there are procedures that can be used in those circumstances. If you have a capability procedure that is there to be supportive and developmental, then that procedure can be used to provide the training that the individual would need. As a trade union, if we get involved in those situations, we will make sure that our members who are in those circumstances will go on the behaviour management courses that we offer.

[111] **Christine Chapman:** Apologies to witnesses and Members, but we have about five minutes left and I really want to touch on the issue that we talked about—I think that it was David who raised it—regarding links with other agencies. We will spend a couple of minutes on that, and then there were a couple of other specific things that we wanted to ask, but I ask Members and witnesses for concise questions and answers now.

[112] **Julie Morgan:** David, you asked what education is, which is obviously a big challenge—

[113] **Simon Thomas:** That is not a concise question, Julie. [*Laughter.*]

[114] **Julie Morgan:** We will not address it in five minutes, but obviously it has come up a lot. Some services are short of staff. For example, the NUT in its evidence mentions psychologists and child and adolescent mental health services. You do not feel that you get as much response as you need, and the key to all this is the agencies working together. Do you have examples of where it does work? How could you spread it out more?

[115] **Mr Healey:** There is a very good example in the south of Gwynedd. Rolant might be able to say a little bit about it as well. I have forgotten the acronym that they use, but it is basically multi-agency working around the child, and the agencies are working so closely together, and have built up such a good level of trust, that they now nominate a single person from whichever agency—and it can be any of them, literally—as the contact with the family, through which all the other agencies feed. I think that is very good practice.

[116] **Julie Morgan:** I wonder if we could have a note with some information on that, because that sounds very good.

[117] **Mr Healey:** Okay.

[118] **Julie Morgan:** Is there any way for that to be shared with other parts of the country?

[119] **Mr Healey:** There is a programme in Gwynedd to roll it out across the county, because at the moment it is concentrated in south Gwynedd.

[120] **Mr Wynne:** Rwy'n ymwybodol o'r prosiect hwn, a'r hyn sy'n allweddol yw bod gennych un person sy'n ei arwain. Mae tuedd i feddwl mai ysgolion sy'n gorfod cymryd y sedd flaen ym mhob un o'r gweithgareddau hyn, ac mae hynny'n rhoi baich ychwanegol ar ysgolion. Ond, pan mae gennych un person o unrhyw asiantaeth sy'n arwain ac yn cydlynu'r ddarpariaeth, mae'r teulu, yr ysgol a'r gwasanaeth iechyd yn gallu cysylltu â nhw. Yr hyn sydd wedi digwydd yng Ngwynedd yw bod adnoddau'r sir wedi cael eu canolbwyntio ar y prosiect hwn, sydd wedi bod yn llwyddiannus, ond a fydd yr adnoddau ar gael ar draws Gwynedd ac ar draws Cymru, ac a yw hyn yn gynaliadwy? Dyna yw ein pryder ni: oes, mae arfer dda o gydweithio ar draws asiantaethau yma, ond a yw'n ymarferol ac yn gynaliadwy?

Mr Wynne: I am aware of this project, and what is key is that you have one person who leads it. There is a tendency to think that schools must take the lead in all these activities, and that places an extra burden on schools. However, when you have one person from any agency who leads and co-ordinates provision, the family, the school and the health service can contact them. What has happened in Gwynedd is that the county's resources have been concentrated on this project, which has been successful, but will those resources be available across Gwynedd and across Wales, and is this sustainable? That is our concern: yes, there is good practice of collaborative working across agencies here, but is it practical and sustainable?

[121] **Mr Phillips:** Multi-agency working depends on trust. The trust has to be there between the agencies—between the schools and agencies like social services. Regrettably, I have to say that our experience is that, in too many local authorities, the trust is not there. For our members in the schools and social services, trust does not exist because people are coming at things from different directions.

[122] **Julie Morgan:** So you think there is a different ideological approach, almost.

[123] **Mr Phillips:** I think so, Julie. One of the problems that we have come back to is this issue of allegations and the way in which they are dealt with. That is where the trust breaks down, because one agency is coming at it purely from the point of view of the needs of the child, whereas we as a trade union, and our members, will want to come at it from the point of view of the needs of the teacher and the actions of the teacher. Regrettably, when you get into those circumstances, it takes a long time to feed the views of the teacher into the system.

[124] **Julie Morgan:** Could that be covered by much earlier collaboration in the way that has been described in Gwynedd?

[125] **Mr Phillips:** Absolutely. Certainly, the whole issue of the way in which allegations against teachers are dealt with needs to be revisited, because we get members who are suspended for months and months only to find—as we did yesterday, after 10 months—that the allegations are dismissed by the governing body. It is then a waste of everybody's time.

10.15 a.m.

[126] **Mr Wynne:** A siarad o brofiad, mae gwasanaethau cymdeithasol yn arbennig o dda, ond mae *turnover* staff yn aruthrol. Felly, er mwyn cael cydweithio, mae angen rhyw fath o sefydlogrwydd. Efallai bydd gan deuluoedd un gweithiwr cymdeithasol am dri mis ac un arall wedyn. Mae'r system yn torri i lawr oherwydd nad oes cysondeb o ran y staff mewn asiantaethau eraill.

Mr Wynne: Speaking from experience, social services are very good, but the turnover of staff is very high. Therefore, in order to ensure co-operation, there needs to be some degree of stability. Families might have one social worker for three months, but then another after that. The system falls down because there is no consistency with regard to the staff in other agencies.

[127] **Christine Chapman:** I know that Members had further questions. We have had very good papers from you, but if you are happy for me to do so, I will write to you with further questions that go beyond the papers that you have produced. So, there will be slightly different questions. I thank you all for attending this morning. This is an important inquiry and your views and responses are critical to this. However, once again, I thank you for attending. It has been a very good session. We will send you a copy of the transcript of the meeting so that you can check it for factual accuracy. Thank you for attending today.

[128] We will now take a short break and reconvene at 10.30 a.m.

*Gohiriwyd y cyfarfod rhwng 10.16 a.m. a 10.30 a.m.
The meeting adjourned between 10.16 a.m. and 10.30 a.m.*

Ymchwiliad i Ymddygiad a Phresenoldeb—Sesiwn Dystiolaeth Inquiry into Attendance and Behaviour—Evidence Session

[129] **Rebecca Evans:** I welcome our witnesses this morning. Could you introduce yourselves and your role for the benefit of the record?

[130] **Mr Pratt:** Good morning. I am Tim Pratt, and I am currently the headteacher at Caerleon Comprehensive School. I am also immediate past president of the Association of School and College Leaders Cymru.

[131] **Mr Davies:** My name is Hugh Davies, and I am the head of Olchfa School in Swansea. I am the current president of ASCL Cymru.

[132] **Mr Jones:** I am Gareth Jones, secretary of ASCL Cymru. Mark Durbin from National Association of Head Teachers Cymru cannot attend, so I am a late substitute.

[133] **Ms Brychan:** Bore da. Anna Brychan ydw i, cyfarwyddwr NAHT Cymru. Mae Mark Durbin yn ymddiheuro nad yw'n gallu bod yma y bore yma; roedd yn gorfod tynnu mas ar y funud olaf oherwydd salwch yn y teulu ac mae'n ymddiheuro.

Ms Brychan: Good morning. I am Anna Brychan, director of NAHT Cymru. Mark Durbin apologises that he cannot be here; he had to withdraw at the last minute due to an illness in the family and he sends his apologies.

[134] **Rebecca Evans:** Thank you. We have made a note of the apologies from Mark Durbin.

[135] Thank you for the written evidence that you have presented to us, which we have all had a chance to read. If you are content, we will move straight into questions because we have a lot of ground to cover. Please do not feel that you all need to provide an answer to every question.

[136] You said in your written evidence that there has been a delay in implementing the recommendations of the national behaviour and attendance review. In your view, what are the main causes for that delay?

[137] **Mr Jones:** First of all, the NBAR had over 100 recommendations. Therefore, in terms of implementation, there was a need for resources in some cases and for co-ordination in other cases. Therefore, different factors have applied in different parts of the NBAR. For example, the move to consortia has disrupted some of the normal working patterns at local authority level, which is understandable during a period of change. That has impeded some of the multi-agency working that NBAR placed a strong emphasis on and that school leaders rely on for support.

[138] **Ms Brychan:** Roedd arwyddion cynnar wedi cyhoeddi'r adroddiad y byddai oedi o ran gweithredu rhai o'r argymhellion. Efallai fod yr ateb yn gymharol syml, sef nad oedd hyn yn cael ei ystyried yn flaenoriaeth o'i gymharu â nifer o flaenoriaethau eraill ar y pryd.

Ms Brychan: There were early indications following the report's publication that there would be a delay in some of the recommendations' implementation. Perhaps the answer is relatively simple, namely that this was not considered a priority compared with a number of other priorities at the time.

[139] **Suzy Davies:** Did the fact that there were three delivery plans on the back of that strategy—each one hot on the heels of the other—confuse matters even more? Would that be a reason for the delay?

[140] **Mr Davies:** I do not think that it has helped. Our fundamental point is that the position across Wales is very variable. Local authorities have engaged with some of these agendas with varying degrees of success and speed. The evidence that we are picking up as an association is that the success or failure of strategies is very much down to the school level, and the ability of schools—

[141] **Suzy Davies:** Rather than at local authority level.

[142] **Mr Davies:** I think that some of the downward pressure is coming from local authorities, and some of the support, but the success that schools are able to make of those demands is largely dependent on their own initiatives. We would also want to make a point about the funding of those initiatives, because a lot are grant framed or time limited and they do not have suitable exit strategies in some cases. So, a lot of the good practice that we are picking up is sometimes being jeopardised by the lack of continuing funding.

[143] **Mr Pratt:** As Gareth said, the arrival of the consortia has delayed things further, because they are struggling to find their feet and become effective. Their main focus has been on targets for examinations and on trying to get themselves into schools and known as effective organisations, with varying degrees of success.

[144] **Simon Thomas:** Ar hynny, eisoes yn y pedwar munud cyntaf, rydych wedi sôn am rôl ysgolion, awdurdodau lleol a chonsortia, ac, wrth gwrs, mae adolygiad Ken Reid yn sôn am y lefel genedlaethol yn hyn oll. O'ch profiad chi, pa lefel sydd orau i ddelifro rhyw fath o gynllun i reoli absenoldeb? Ai'r lefel ysgol, awdurdod, rhanbarthol neu genedlaethol yw? Beth yw'r system orau a mwyaf effeithiol ar gyfer Cymru?

Simon Thomas: On that issue, already in the first four minutes, you have talked about the role of schools, local authorities and consortia, and, of course, Ken Reid's review talks about the national level in this context. From your experience, what is the best level to deliver some sort of scheme to manage absences? Is it at a school, authority, or regional level or the national level? What is the best and most effective system for Wales?

[145] **Mr Jones:** The school leader should answer that.

[146] **Mr Davies:** I do not think that those things are different. Clearly, a national agenda needs to be set around behaviour and attendance, and that needs to percolate down through the system.

[147] **Simon Thomas:** Is banding enough of that?

[148] **Mr Davies:** I think that what we are saying is that there is not enough evidence of consistency across Wales, which reflects different priorities within local authorities and the consortia, and different levels of funding. I suppose that you could replicate this argument over any number of issues related to education and schools in Wales. Where there is best practice, that practice is very effective and it has made a real impact in schools. We are repeating ourselves, I know, but the picture is patchy across Wales. That is not because the Assembly has not given a lead on it; it is just in the nature of the many conflicting demands, which you referred to, that are consistently being made of local authorities and schools, and different authorities will have different priorities at any one time.

[149] **Mr Pratt:** One of the big issues is that, where attendance is a significant concern, despite all the initiatives that have been put in, we are looking at a need for more work to be done on parenting, because that, we often find, is the single most influential concern. It may not be as simple as the proposal for a spot fine; that may have an impact, but it may not. However, there is a real concern, certainly at the secondary level, about the level of parenting skills and the ability and willingness of parents to accept responsibility.

[150] **Simon Thomas:** On that point, by the time you come to secondary level, I would suggest that it is too late anyway, and that you are talking about early intervention and identifying these problems at the age of six, seven or eight or, as we heard last week, even younger. I come back to the earlier point: is that an issue for the school or does the local authority do it? In the regionalisation agenda, how can we ensure that we keep a focus on this early intervention, which is a peer-to-peer, person-to-person relationship rather than an institutional relationship?

[151] **Mr Jones:** The first thing is tackling the problems that lie in the home and the community. You are quite right in that respect. It is a multi-agency task. One of the complicating factors is the discordance between the consortia arrangements, because there are four consortia in education, but social services have a different number—

[152] **Simon Thomas:** It is five, I think.

[153] **Mr Jones:** So, sometimes, in some places, there will be a mismatch, and that complicates the communication that is essential for effective planning. For children with special needs and looked-after children, the intention in terms of social care of having that planned approach may help—I cannot remember the term that they have used on that. That will be an improvement, but, at the moment, there is a certain sense of discordance in some parts.

[154] **Mr Davies:** For schools, there are particular problems with the parenting issue, because they are issues not just of parenting per se, but also around a second and third generation of parents whose own experiences of school, sometimes at the same school in a previous incarnation, were negative. So, it is not just about the parenting skills, but about their engagement with education through that particular school, about which they may have formed a negative opinion.

[155] Moving on from that, the multi-agency approach is absolutely essential. I think that it is fair to say that schools often feel a little bit inhibited. Where there is best practice, it works highly effectively. You are absolutely right to say that the work needs to be done at a very young age in advance of any problems. However, there are real problems with some multi-agency working around the different sets of protocols that exist, for instance with social services and the police, compared with schools. The throughflow of information is often very good from school to those other agencies, because we comply. However, sometimes it is less good the other way round. So, schools struggle sometimes with children who have had engagement with the criminal justice system or with social services, about which we know nothing. That really puts us on the back foot, I think, as schools are then trying to deal with some of the repercussions of these things on a day-to-day level. So, I think that there is a job of work to be done around exactly how agencies are expected to collaborate and the protocols and confidentiality that exist, because there are certainly different levels in the different sectors.

[156] **Rebecca Evans:** We have some questions coming up later on multi-agency working and parental engagement. I will take a question from Aled and from Jenny, and then we will move on to teacher training.

[157] **Aled Roberts:** Wrth i'r consortia gael eu sefydlu, maent yn ymwneud â gwella ysgolion yn y lle cyntaf. Fodd bynnag, mae tystiolaeth sy'n dweud bod rhan o'r gwaith o ran gwella cyrhaeddiad yn ddibynnol ar wella presenoldeb o fewn yr ysgol. A ydych yn dweud nad oes tystiolaeth bod y consortia yn gweld hwn fel rhan o'r patrwm? A oes perygl, wrth iddynt gael eu sefydlu ar fodolau gwahanol, fod llai o gysylltiad yn y pen draw â gwasanaethau lles addysg a phethau felly, a fydd yn aros gyda'r awdurdodau lleol?

Aled Roberts: As the consortia are established, they are concerned with school improvement in the first instance. However, there is evidence that states that some of the work to improve attainment is dependent on improving attendance within the school. Are you saying that there is no evidence that the consortia see this as part of the pattern? Is there a danger, as they are being established on different models, that there is less of a link, at the end of the day, between education welfare services and so forth, which will remain with the local authorities?

[158] **Ms Brychan:** Mae perygl yn hynny, rwy'n credu. Roedd hynny'n gyrru rhan o'n tystiolaeth. Gofynnodd Simon yn gynharach pa lefel sy'n gyfrifol am ba elfen. Yn amlwg, mae gan Lywodraeth genedlaethol ddyletswydd i osod y cyfeiriad a'r polisi yn hyn o beth, ond dim ond yn lleol—naill ai drwy'r awdurdodau lleol neu'r consortia—y bydd yn gallu cael ei weithredu yn rymus ac yn effeithiol. Mae'n dibynnu i raddau helaeth ar gefnogi teuluoedd a defnyddio gwasanaethau addysg, gwasanaethau cymdeithasol a gwasanaethau iechyd gyda'i gilydd i hyrwyddo hynny. Wrth i'r consortia gael eu rhoi yn eu lle, mae lot o'u hegni wedi mynd ar osod eu strwythurau a chanolbwyntio ar sicrhau pa fodel o wella ysgolion y maent yn mynd i ganolbwyntio arno. Mae perygl go iawn yn yr ymdrech honno y bydd llai o adnodd ac amser yn cael eu rhoi i feithrin, datblygu a pharhau'r cysylltiadau gydag awdurdodau lleol eraill,

Ms Brychan: There is a danger in that regard, I think. That drove part of our evidence. Simon asked earlier what level is responsible for which element. Clearly, the national Government has a duty to set the direction of policy in this regard, but only locally—either through the local authorities or the consortia—can this be implemented in a robust and effective manner. It depends, to a great extent, on supporting families and using education services, social services and health services together to promote that. As the consortia have been put in place, a lot of their energy has been expended on putting in place their structures and concentrating on ensuring which model of school improvement they will concentrate on. There is a genuine danger in that effort that less resource and time will be given to fostering, developing and continuing the links with other local authorities, such as health and social services. They are crucially important

fel iechyd a gwasanaethau cymdeithasol. in this effort, so I agree that that is a genuine
 Maent yn gwbl hanfodol yn yr ymdrech hon, concern.
 felly rwy'n cytuno bod hynny'n bryder go
 iawn.

[159] **Mr Jones:** There is a fair point here. As currently structured, the consortia are focused on identifying what needs to improve and acting as commissioning agents to bring about school improvement. The education welfare services are not part of the consortia; they are back to the individual local authorities. This kind of disparity and discordance will be the focus of the review of the delivery of education services. It is an issue that needs to be discussed. However, I recognise the point that you are making on that.

[160] **Jenny Rathbone:** I would like to come back to parenting in a minute, but, sticking with the consortia, you said in your evidence that there is a shortage of EWOs. This is obviously a pretty major issue. Do you think that that will improve or get worse with the consortia?

[161] **Mr Pratt:** As Gareth said, EWOs are not employed by the consortia, they are employed by the local authorities—

[162] **Jenny Rathbone:** That is true, but you are going to have consortia for some strategic aspects of education delivery and then other parts of services that are crucial, like EWOs, will not be included. Do you think that that will impact on the relationship between EWOs, schools and families?

10.45 a.m.

[163] **Mr Pratt:** I am not sure that it will have a significant impact. The main concern is where there are no EWOs in place. That is down to local authorities. Where they are in place, schools work well with them.

[164] **Jenny Rathbone:** Why, in some areas, have headteachers allowed local authorities to get away with employing fewer EWOs, given that it is such an important part of the piece?

[165] **Mr Davies:** I would not say that headteachers have allowed local authorities to get away with that; I think that those decisions have been challenged very strongly. However, another thing that we face at the moment is that, with increased delegation of funding to schools, and after the school funding guarantee ends in 2015, the budgets for education are likely to be hit quite severely along with other council services across Wales. Our fear is that services, such as the EWO service and other non-statutory services, will be the first victims, if you like, of the cuts. They are the softer targets. To return to your first point as to whether we see the EWO service being expanded or contracted, it is very difficult in the current climate to see a route-map through to there being more EWOs in the system in Wales at the moment.

[166] **Jenny Rathbone:** Now that you have 85% delegation of budgets to schools, what is to stop governing bodies, either as a school or as a cluster of schools, from employing their own EWO?

[167] **Mr Davies:** I agree with you. If I can express a personal view for a minute, in our school, for instance, we employed a former senior EWO for Swansea as a part-time pastoral guidance worker in our school on a contract of two-and-a-half days per week. Of course, her specialism is attendance, so, she is remarkably effective and works with families, but that is just something that we have been able to do. I agree with you that, with increased delegation, schools potentially have choices to make. One of those choices could be to engage more EWOs, but I think that that debate about increased delegation is a much deeper and wider

one.

[168] **Jenny Rathbone:** Yes, but you, as headteachers, have an awful lot of influence on how governing bodies approach the budget.

[169] **Mr Davies:** Yes, we do, but I think that it would be wrong to assume that, in the progress towards meeting the target of 85% delegation, there are no robust debates within authorities about what that actually means in terms of the detail, and schools are looking very carefully, to be frank, at how that delegation is shaking out. The suspicion is that, while being able to say that schools are now having more delegated funding, the reality is that core services are being cut back and schools have to purchase them instead, sometimes at greater cost. So, really, the increased delegation is quite often illusory. It is not the reality. I do not think that it is possible.

[170] **Simon Thomas:** It is not about more money.

[171] **Mr Davies:** No, it is not.

[172] **Jenny Rathbone:** No, we know that. That is clear.

[173] **Rebecca Evans:** I think that Anna was hoping to come in on this question.

[174] **Ms Brychan:** Yes. The fact that headteachers have influence on the budget sadly does not ultimately make the budget any bigger. Many schools—and we included some examples—have employed staff to deal with attendance and behaviour issues specifically. That, in many cases, has been highly effective, particularly in one example that we cited, where the pupil deprivation grant was used, in part, to support particularly those free-school-meal pupils who have problems with attendance and behaviour. That has been highly effective according to the attendance leap that they have managed to achieve. So, such solutions are possible and are being pursued. There is a great deal of respect in schools for the people who do this work, either at local authority level or on their own staff. The pressure that they are under, whether they are at school or at local authority level, to maintain a service and the contact with pupils is something that they can find very hard to deal with. However, given the earlier points that it is a matter of that early intervention with pupils and with their families, critically, that is what we need to concentrate on, and that will have the greatest effect in the long term. Even if schools employ people—and even if some are employed by the local authority—the pool that we have overall is stretched very thinly.

[175] **Jenny Rathbone:** However, if there were a demonstrable improvement, is that not evident in the family and schools data; and therefore are other schools going to say, ‘We would like a bit of that’?

[176] **Ms Brychan:** Yes, they will very possibly do that.

[177] **Mr Jones:** May I just clarify one point? The delegation rate is not 85% at the moment—that is the target. The figures for 2012-13 would show that, on average, in the current financial year, the rate of delegation is about 80% to 81%. I do not think that many local authorities delegate the funding for education welfare officers—I do not know about Swansea or Newport. That is not part of the delegation at present in the majority of local authorities.

[178] **Rebecca Evans:** Jenny, I think that we need to move on to teacher training, given that we have so much ground to cover. Suzy?

[179] **Suzy Davies:** I will combine my questions. Having listened to your evidence, it

appears to me that there might be a move towards schools providing more of their own education welfare in future in relation to the delegation. In which case, teacher training is going to be paramount. I am guessing that, at the moment, most of the upskilling comes from continuous professional development. We have heard that attendance and behaviour training is now part of the initial teacher training course in England, which is not the case here.

[180] First, do you think that the 2011 plan goes far enough in addressing attendance and behaviour training? Obviously, they are two different things. Secondly, is the initial teacher training course the place to be concentrating on learning about attendance and behaviour or is it a more specialised craft for later on in training? Thirdly, do you think that the reason that it is not there at the moment is to do with funding or just because the curriculum is too crammed in the initial teacher training period? Is there an argument for extending the initial period of teacher training to accommodate not just attendance and behaviour, but also other pressures on the curriculum?

[181] **Mr Pratt:** The initial teacher training, prior to young teachers having a job, needs to focus more on behaviour. Attendance, although linked to classroom work, is slightly separate. With regard to behaviour, what we tend to find with newly qualified teachers coming for interview is that their level of understanding of good, effective behaviour management strategies is quite low. We do not feel that the colleges and universities currently put enough into that, because although their ability to teach can often be very good—and we have been terribly impressed by an awful lot of young teachers who come to us—if they are not equipped to manage the behaviour side as well, that can prevent them from being as effective as they should be. It is becoming an issue.

[182] **Suzy Davies:** Did the 2011 plan tick that box for you?

[183] **Mr Pratt:** Not totally.

[184] **Mr Jones:** I would add that with the 2011 plan, the induction of teachers now involves a mandatory module on behaviour management. On the other hand, that is only just coming in, so it is yet to be seen whether that will work.

[185] **Suzy Davies:** It will be quite small if it is just part of the induction, surely?

[186] **Mr Jones:** It is part of it—part of the process, the action plan and the implementation plan. The problem is that we are only two years on, so it is early days to know whether it is working.

[187] **Ms Brychan:** Roeddech yn gofyn pryd oedd yr adeg gorau i gyflwyno hyfforddiant penodol ar ymddygiad. Fel yr oedd Tim yn dweud, mae diffyg profiad neu sgiliau o ran delio â phroblemau ymddygiad yn gallu effeithio ar sut y mae'r athro neu'r athrawes yn addysgu, a llwyddiant y disgyblion sy'n cael eu haddysgu. Hefyd, os yw athrawon newydd yn cael problemau gydag ymddygiad o ddechrau eu gyrfa, gall hynny gael effaith ddinistriol iawn ar hyder y bobl hynny sydd, yn y bôn, yn athrawon sydd â'r potensial i fod yn wych. Os yw eu hyder yn cael ei danseilio yn gynnar yn eu gyrfa—nid oherwydd eu sgiliau addysgu ond oherwydd eu sgiliau rheoli ymddygiad—mae

Ms Brychan: You were asking about the best stage at which to introduce specific training on behaviour. As Tim said, a lack of experience or skills to deal with behaviour problems can affect how a teacher teaches and the success of the pupils being taught. Also, if a new teacher experiences problems with behaviour from the beginning of their career, that can have a detrimental effect on the confidence of that person who has the potential to be an excellent teacher. If their confidence is undermined early on in their career—not because of their teaching skills but because of their behaviour management skills—that is a great disappointment for them and can be a great loss to the education

hynny'n siom mawr iddynt ac yn golled fawr, o bosibl, i'r system addysg. Dyna pam y byddem yn dadlau'n benodol i gynnwys elfennau o hyn yn yr hyfforddiant cynnar, yn hytrach na'i adael tan nes ymlaen.

system. That is why we would argue specifically in favour of including elements of this in the early stages of training, rather than leaving it to a later stage.

[188] **Aled Roberts:** Mae tystiolaeth o'n blaenau sy'n dangos prinder dybryd o ran darpariaeth addysg heblaw addysg yn yr ysgol. Beth yw eich profiad o'r problemau sy'n cael eu creu yn yr ysgolion prif ffrwd o achos diffyg lleoedd yn y ddarpariaeth hon?

Aled Roberts: We have evidence before us that shows a great lack of other-than-in-school provision. What is your experience of the problems that are created within mainstream schools due to the lack of spaces within this provision?

[189] **Mr Davies:** Depending on the school, there are profound problems at times. Clearly, education other than at school is a crucial part of the strategy to engage youngsters and to create an environment where they can be safely and productively educated if the school placement breaks down. As you are right to say, the experience of professionals across Wales is that there are not enough places on these alternative pathways, and that they tend to magically come into existence at the point when a child is about to be permanently excluded. Sometimes, the debate will change if a school says that it is about to permanently exclude. Suddenly, a place magically becomes available. We think that that is reactive, rather than proactive. If there were more such places available, as part of a more joined-up strategy, I think that pupils would not reach those points of crisis in the way that they currently do in some contexts.

[190] **Aled Roberts:** What is your view on policy decisions at local authority level to redesign the service to have in-school units, rather than stand-alone pupil referral units? I am aware of moves in certain areas along those lines.

[191] **Mr Davies:** If you are asking for my personal view, I do not have a particularly strong view on the desirability of localising in schools or having external units or provision, because it is clear across England and Wales that different models can work effectively in different contexts. The proper provision of funding is key to it, because the danger when you delegate and distribute funding thinly is that the provision in schools can be quite thin, unless they work effectively in clusters. That is particularly acute in areas where there are small secondary schools, which simply do not have the resources available to them to be able to produce a meaningful provision. Cluster arrangements can work sometimes, but they require a lot of input and bureaucracy.

[192] **Rebecca Evans:** I want to give Anna a chance to come in, to reflect the views of a different association. Do you have anything further or different that you would like to add?

[193] **Ms Brychan:** I am happy for Gareth to go first.

[194] **Mr Jones:** Thank you. That is putting me in the firing line. [*Laughter.*]

[195] One of the dangers of in-school provision is that you can create a reputation for that school as being a sink school. You can create a situation where other parents then move their children away because they perceive that school as being a school that takes all the problem children. That is one of the dangers. In reality, you have some youngsters whose behaviour has become so extreme that they will not fit in to any mainstream environment. So, there will still always need to be an alternative provision. However, I will come back to the point that Simon made earlier in this meeting, which is that the problem starts very much earlier than that. What we are talking about currently is in-school situations for later secondary school. That is very different; that is too late. Really, we need to look at the intervention strategies at

ages five to seven, or even earlier. I am not sure what the answers are, but I think that that is an issue.

[196] **Ms Brychan:** Nid wyf yn siŵr a fyddai gennym ni farn bendant ychwaith ynghylch a yw'n well cael uned ar wahân mewn ysgol neu yn rhywle arall. Un o'r pethau y byddem yn eu codi yn y cyd-destun hwn, ac mae ein haelodau wedi bod yn pryderu ynglŷn ag ef, yn sicr, yw'r ffaith nad yw'r unedau yn ein hysgolion ar hyn o bryd o reidrwydd wedi eu cynllunio ag ystyriaeth digon gofalus o anghenion rhai o'n disgyblion. Maent yn tueddu i fod yn hen adeiladau, er enghraifft.

Ms Brychan: I am not sure whether we have a definite opinion either on whether it would be better to have a stand-alone unit in a school or elsewhere. One of the issues that I would raise on this point, which our members have been concerned about, is the fact that the units within the schools have not necessarily been designed with the needs of the pupils considered carefully enough. They tend to be old buildings, for example.

11.00 a.m.

[197] Mae gofynion plant sydd ag anghenion dysgu ychwanegol yn gallu bod yn wahanol iawn, ac maent yn gallu gwrthdaro. Mae angen llai o *stimulus* yn eu hamgylcheddau ar rai plant i'w galluogi i ddatblygu hyd eithaf eu gallu. Mae angen y gwrthwyneb yn llwyr ar eraill. Mae pryder nad ydym yn meddwl—wrth newid adeiladau ysgolion neu adeiladu rhai newydd—am ofynion y rheiny'n ddigon gofalus i sicrhau bod modd addasu'r awyrgylch i siwtio unigolion. Rydym yn trio creu darpariaeth lle gall unigolion ddysgu hyd eithaf eu gallu. Os ydynt mewn awyrgylch gyda phobl eraill sy'n dysgu mewn ffyrdd hollol wahanol ac felly sy'n tarfu arnynt, yna mae hynny'n broblem go iawn. Felly, nid oes gwahaniaeth ble mae'r ddarpariaeth, ond efallai nad yw'r fath bethau'n cael eu hystyried. Mae awtistiaeth gan 1% o blant mewn ysgolion Cymru, er enghraifft. Mae hynny'n debygol o godi'n sylweddol. Mae rôl fawr i gynllunio'n fanwl, ymlaen llaw, gyda'r gofynion hynny mewn golwg.

The requirements of children who have additional learning needs can be very different, and they can clash. Some children need fewer stimuli within their environments to enable them to progress to the best of their abilities. Others need the complete opposite to that. There is a concern that we do not think—while altering school buildings or building new ones—about those children's needs carefully enough to ensure that we can adapt the environments to suit individuals. We are trying to create a provision within which individuals can improve to the best of their abilities. If they are in an environment with other pupils who have conflicting learning needs, then that can cause a real problem. So, it does not matter where the provision is, but such issues are not being taken into account. One per cent of children in schools in Wales have autism, for example. That is likely to rise significantly. There is a big role to play in detailed planning, beforehand, with those needs in mind.

[198] **Rebecca Evans:** Tim, would you like to come in there? Then I will invite Lynne and Jenny to comment on this point.

[199] **Mr Pratt:** I want to make a point about units in schools, which I have picked up on from a number of Members. Where units are placed in schools, very often, the attendance and results of the pupils in the unit count towards overall school figures. You are talking about some of the most difficult children who are not going to attend well or achieve high grades. That reflects very poorly on the overall school figures. Schools have ended up in low bands and in special measures; not because of what is happening in the main school, but because of what is happening in the unit, and there is a need to separate those two things.

[200] **Lynne Neagle:** I want to ask about the pupil referral units, given that I have seen a

big increase in the number of behavioural cases in my constituency. One thing that I have noticed in Torfaen is that while children might be getting access to the PRU, it is only for a very small number of hours a week. How widespread is that, because you then have parents who are really worried that that is barely scratching the surface of their child's educational needs?

[201] **Mr Davies:** It is difficult to say how widespread it is, because we have individual perspectives. One of the issues with PRUs is that the original philosophy behind them was that they were a revolving door and that children would go back to school—it would not be a once-and-for-all strategy. That does not always happen and pupils disappear into PRUs and stay there forever and, if you like, hold spaces. The other issue is the amount of provision that they get. Are they getting their statutory rights for 25 hours and so on?

[202] A wider issue, which applies to PRUs and alternative pathways, is that schools still maintain responsibility for those children and their progress. Sometimes the interface between schools and, let us say, pupil referral units is not as strong as it needs to be because the school still has an ongoing commitment to that child; that is the same in relation to pathways as well. Sometimes, there is not sufficient dialogue around the needs of the child. I think that the child is the victim—the casualty—at the end of that process, or lack of it.

[203] **Jenny Rathbone:** Hugh, you seem to indicate that there is dual registration of pupils while they are in the PRU. My specific question is: do we use dual registration for pupils for whom it is suitable, with the idea being that the pupil goes to the PRU to improve their behaviour, and then for them to go back to their host school?

[204] **Mr Davies:** That is the normal philosophy behind PRUs; that is certainly how it operates in our area.

[205] **Jenny Rathbone:** That is the norm in your area, is it?

[206] **Mr Davies:** Yes.

[207] **Jenny Rathbone:** So, accepting that, in some instances, it might not be possible for the young person to go back to a mainstream school, as far as you are aware, that is the norm in your area?

[208] **Mr Davies:** Yes.

[209] **Mr Jones:** To clarify, I think that you will find that PRUs are not registered schools. As such, every student has to be on the register of a school with a Department for Education and Skills number. In that sense, the pupil referral units are not schools per se.

[210] **Jenny Rathbone:** Thank you. That is useful.

[211] **Julie Morgan:** Just following up on that and what Tim said about the banding putting the PRU in with the school where it is based, the individual pupils are not linked to their original schools, are they?

[212] **Mr Pratt:** If it is a unit within the school then the pupils at that unit count as part of the school.

[213] **Julie Morgan:** Even though they are registered with, or come from, another school.

[214] **Mr Pratt:** It tends not to happen like that with units in schools. They tend to be moved there permanently.

[215] **Julie Morgan:** Is there no recognition of this in the banding system?

[216] **Mr Pratt:** No.

[217] **Jenny Rathbone:** It is a paper exercise, however, so it is perfectly possible to revisit that idea.

[218] **Rebecca Evans:** I will bring Aled back in now. I think that you have some further questions, Aled.

[219] **Aled Roberts:** Gan symud ymlaen at ymddygiad eithafol, ac wrth edrych ar eich tystiolaeth o ran yr hyn sy'n cael ei drafod fel ymddygiad cynyddol herfeiddiol, a'r ffaith bod mân darfu ar wersi o fewn ysgolion, beth yn union yw sail eich tystiolaeth am hynny? **Aled Roberts:** Moving on to extreme behaviour, and looking at your evidence in relation to what is being discussed as increasingly challenging behaviour, and the fact that there is low-level disruption of lessons in schools, what exactly is the basis for your evidence?

[220] **Mr Pratt:** It is anecdotal, but, as headteachers, as we talk to each other, we become increasingly aware that staff are having to deal more and more with challenging behaviour from children, certainly at secondary level. As we said in the evidence, sometimes part of that is that it is supported by parents. A teacher will get to a point with a student and say, 'This is not acceptable behaviour, and I am going to impose a sanction', and the parents will challenge that sanction. As it happens, there is a case in my own school and, this morning, one of my deputies is dealing with a parent who is not prepared for their child to undergo a sanction. It makes it hard for staff to keep the level of discipline that they want when they find that there are challenges that delay the imposition of any sanction. We look at it and say, 'That is a reasonable thing that, as a school, we would expect to happen and for people to accept it'.

[221] **Aled Roberts:** What happens if the parent does not accept the sanction?

[222] **Mr Pratt:** Sometimes you have to enter into negotiations to find a compromise, but that takes a lot of time and effort and it is time that should be spent doing other things. I will give you an example: a child could spend a day out of class in a one-to-one environment, so that they are not disrupting the class—they are not excluded, but in isolation—but a parent might not accept that, so the alternative might be that that child has to do five one-hour detentions. Actually, that does not really solve the problem. Yes, it is inconvenient for the child and the parent, but it is not getting to the nub of the behavioural issue in the same way.

[223] **Rebecca Evans:** I will now take short questions on this from Jenny and Simon.

[224] **Jenny Rathbone:** What difference does food make to the behaviour of your pupils? Lots of companies target high-energy drinks at young people, and some pupils go to school with either no breakfast or a bar of chocolate. What is the role of headteachers in all this?

[225] **Mr Pratt:** We certainly notice, particularly after lunch time, if children have been off site and got a high-energy drink or something like that, that behaviour can be more challenging in that period. As headteachers, we do as much as we can to encourage healthy eating, and to encourage children not to buy those sorts of things. In my particular school, I have an issue in that I cannot keep all the students on-site, which I would prefer, because I do not physically have the resources, the canteen space, to keep them all over lunch time. Therefore, some of them have to go out, and I cannot control what they buy when they are off the school site. There is an issue there. For me, it is not a major issue, but I know that in some schools it is a real concern that behaviour dips dramatically after a break or lunch time.

[226] **Mr Davies:** There is certainly a link. In our school, we keep pupils in at lunch time, but the major influencing factor over the last few years as the healthy eating agenda has progressed has been that the merchandise sold in school has come into line with that agenda, and I would say that instances of what you might call diet-related behaviour have decreased. That has been our experience in our school. We try to facilitate healthy eating; we allow pupils to carry water bottles, so that they drink water—we did have one example of vodka, just the once, which is colourless, obviously, but that was a separate issue. [*Laughter.*] That was a member of staff—no, it was not a member of staff. [*Laughter.*]

[227] I think that it undoubtedly has an impact. I think that schools are a little bit concerned—that is, schools that cannot, for physical reasons, keep pupils within the school grounds at lunchtime do face the extreme irony that they are ever more regulated in terms of what can be offered on the school grounds, yet they know that, immediately on exiting, a child can access all sorts of inappropriate foodstuffs just outside. That is an issue, I think.

[228] **Simon Thomas:** O ran agwedd rhieni at bresenoldeb yn y dosbarth—gyda llaw, gallaf ddweud bod fodca i'w gael yn yr ysgolion 30 mlynedd yn ôl hefyd; nid yw'n beth cwbl newydd. Cawsom dystiolaeth ar bapur gan yr undebau—ni chawsom gyfle i'w holi ar lafar—fod agwedd rhieni at wyliau a phryd y cânt eu cymryd, a sut y mae hynny'n ffitio i mewn, ymysg y problemau sydd ar gynydd yn yr ysgol. Rwyf am eich ymateb yn glou, os caf: yn gyntaf, a yw hynny'n wir; a ydych yn canfod hynny? Yn ail, a ydych, fel undebau, yn ystyried newid y patrwm gwyliau sydd gennym yng Nghymru? A fyddai hynny'n help? Yn drydydd, a yw'r gwyliau haf hir hynny yn broblem o ran presenoldeb ac ymddygiad?

Simon Thomas: With regard to the attitude of parents towards classroom attendance—by the way, I can tell you that vodka was available in schools 30 years ago as well; it is not a completely new thing. We had written evidence from the unions—we did not have an opportunity to question them orally—that the attitude of parents towards holidays and when they can take them, along with how that fits in, is an increasing problem in schools. I would like a brief response from you, if I may: first, is that the case; is that what you have found? Secondly, are you, as unions, considering changing the pattern of holidays in Wales? Would that help? Thirdly, are the long summer holidays causing problems with attendance and behaviour?

[229] **Ms Brychan:** Mae gwyliau'n fater sy'n gallu peri problemau o safbwynt presenoldeb mewn ysgol—gwyliau yn ystod y tymor, er enghraifft. Mae'r rhan fwyaf o'n haelodau ni'n cydymdeimlo â rhieni, sy'n wynebu costau llawer uwch yn ystod gwyliau'r ysgol, ac mae rhinwedd i gael gwyliau teuluol—ni fyddwn yn dadlau â hynny. Fodd bynnag, mae'n peri problemau i ysgolion. Mae cyfarwyddyd diweddaraf y Llywodraeth yn llawer mwy pendant, gan alluogi ysgolion i ddweud 'na', ac mae hynny wedi bod o help mawr. Mae wedi golygu bod rhai sgysiau reit anodd a heriol â rhieni sy'n teimlo'n gryf na ddylent golli'r cyfle i fynd ar eu gwyliau am na allent fforddio fynd ar adeg arall, ond mae wedi gwneud gwahaniaeth ac wedi bod yn erfyn defnyddiol iawn i'r ysgolion.

Ms Brychan: Holidays are an issue that can cause problems in relation to school attendance—holidays during term time, for instance. The majority of our members sympathise with parents, who face much higher costs during the school holidays, and there is merit in having a family holiday—we would not argue against that. However, it does cause problems for schools. The latest Government guidance is a great deal more specific, allowing schools to say 'no', and that has been a great help. It has led to some quite difficult and challenging discussions with parents who feel very strongly that they should not miss out on the opportunity to go on holiday, which they could not afford to do otherwise, but it has made a difference and has been a very useful tool for schools.

[230] O ran newid y tymhorau, byddai'n With regard to changing the terms, it would

debyg o safbwynt y farchnad. Er imi oedi cyn dweud felly, pe bai amser gwyliau Cymru tamaid bach yn wahanol i amser gwyliau'r farchnad fwy yn Lloegr, byddai'n golygu na fyddai'r prisiau yn codi mor sydyn pan fyddai ein gwyliau swyddogol yn dechrau.

be similar as regards the market. Although I hesitate to suggest it, if the dates of school holidays in Wales were to differ slightly from those of the larger English market, it would mean that the prices would not increase as sharply once our holidays had officially started.

[231] O safbwynt newid y tymhorau'n ehangach, rydym wastad wedi dadlau y byddai hynny'n syniad da. Nid ydym wedi mynd ymhell iawn gyda'r ddadl hon gan fod blaenoriaethau eraill wastad, ac nid yw'r holl drafodaeth a negodi y byddai'n rhaid wrthyt i gael y newid hwnnw yn rhywbeth a ystyriwyd yn flaenoriaeth yn y blynyddoedd a fu. Mae'n wir dweud, fodd bynnag, fod gwyliau hir yr haf yn gallu effeithio ar ymddygiad, presenoldeb a chynnydd plant wrth iddynt fynd yn ôl ym mis Medi, yn enwedig os nad ydynt, yn y cyfnod hir hwnnw, wedi cael y gefnogaeth i ddod ymlaen y mae rhai plant eraill wedi ei chael. Felly, rydym yn credu'n gryf ei fod yn rhywbeth inni edrych arno, ac rydym yn sylweddoli cymaint o gamp fyddai newid ein tymhorau, a faint o ddadlau a fyddai ynglŷn â'r peth, a dyna paham y mae'n debyg nad ydym wedi ei wneud.

With regard to changing term times more generally, we have always argued that that would be a good idea. We have not gone very far with this argument, as there have always been other priorities, and all the discussions and negotiations that would be necessary to bring about such a change have not been seen as a priority in past years. It is true to say, however, that the long summer holidays can affect behaviour, attendance and children's progress when they return in September, particularly if they have not received the support to develop that other children have had during that period. So, we strongly believe that it is something for us to look at, and we realise just how much of an achievement it would be to change our term times and how much debate that would stir up, and that is most likely why we have not done it.

[232] **Bethan Jenkins:** Mae gennyf gwestiwn ynglŷn â gwaharddiadau. Cawsom dystiolaeth gan NASUWT na ddylai fod targedau ar gyfer gwahardd disgyblion o gwbl. Rwyf am wybod eich barn chi ynglŷn ag a ddylid lleihau gwaharddiadau. Ai dyna'r *last resort*, ynteu a ydych yn ceisio rhoi canllawiau eraill ar waith fel nad ydych yn gorfod gwahardd disgyblion yn syth?

Bethan Jenkins: I have a question on exclusions. We had evidence from the NASUWT that there should be no pupil exclusion targets at all. I am interested in your view on whether exclusions should be decreased. Should it be the last resort, or are you trying to implement other guidance so that you do not have to exclude pupils straight away?

[233] **Mr Pratt:** We would certainly never use exclusion lightly, but I would have to say that the use of targets for exclusions is a real finger-in-the-air job, because you can have something happen that means you have to use exclusion for something where you would not have expected that. At a stroke, you can exceed your targets for exclusions.

11.15 a.m.

[234] **Bethan Jenkins:** What do you mean by that? Could you explain that?

[235] **Mr Pratt:** Yes. For example, if a group of students were caught bringing drugs onto the school site, you would have to act on that because you cannot, as a responsible headteacher, be seen to condone that sort of abuse in any way. In doing that, if you sent each member of a group of four students out for a week, that is 20 days. If your exclusions target for the year was 15 days, that is your target gone. That might happen one year, and for the following three years, you might not have anything like that, so that target might have seemed

reasonable before the beginning of the year but is completely irrelevant in the light of what has happened. You cannot predict what is going to happen. That is where the idea for targets for exclusions is so unhelpful, because I could put a target down on paper and three weeks later I could be three times over that target because of a series of events that I could not have foreseen.

[236] **Bethan Jenkins:** Therefore, it would not be that you would be actively looking to exceed that, it would just be by circumstance, which the data would not reflect. It would be difficult to get that out of black-and-white figures.

[237] **Mr Jones:** There is a difference in terminology: there is a difference between saying that we are monitoring exclusions and having a target. The exclusion rates need to be monitored and reasons for rises and falls need to be explored properly. That is part of the dialogue that should be taking place between the school improvement services and school leadership, but to try to put it down as a target creates a hostage to fortune.

[238] **Ms Brychan:** Byddwn yn poeni am hynny am reswm ychydig yn wahanol. Mae gan ysgolion ac awdurdodau lleol dargedau, yn enwedig o ran cau disgyblion allan yn barhaol. Gallaf ddeall pam fod y pwysau hwnnw yn y system—nid oes unrhyw un eisiau gwneud hyn. Fodd bynnag, gan fod y pwysau i ostwng y niferoedd yn llym, mae pryder bod datrysiadau eraill yn cael eu hawgrymu—addysgu mewn man arall, fel yn y cartref, neu gyfuniad o'r ddau; llai o amserlen a'r math hwnnw o beth—pan efallai eu gwahardd o'r ysgol am gyfnod fyddai wedi bod y datrysiad gorau, oherwydd, o wneud hynny, mae gwasanaethau eraill yn cael eu tynnu i mewn i gefnogi'r disgyblion hynny. Os nad yw hynny'n digwydd, mae'n bosibl na fyddant yn cael y gefnogaeth sydd ei hangen arnynt. Felly, er bod rhywun yn deall gyriant cenedlaethol i ostwng y niferoedd, efallai nad yw rhai o'r effeithiau mor ddefnyddiol i'r disgyblion unigol ag y gallent fod.

Ms Brychan: That would concern me for a slightly different reason. Schools and local authorities have targets, particularly in relation to the permanent exclusion of pupils. I can understand why that pressure exists in the system—nobody wants to do this. However, seeing as the pressure to reduce the numbers is quite severe, there is concern that other solutions are suggested—being educated elsewhere, such as at home, or a combination of the two; a reduced timetable and that kind of thing—when perhaps being excluded from the school for a period would have been the best solution, because, in doing that, other services would be drawn in to support those pupils. If that does not happen, it is possible that they will not get the support that they need. Therefore, although one understands the national drive to reduce numbers, some of the effects may not be as useful to individual pupils as they could be.

[239] **Bethan Jenkins:** Roedd yr ail gwestiwn yn ymdrin â hynny: a ydych yn gwybod am amgylchiadau pan fo gwaharddiadau answyddogol neu anghyfreithlon yn digwydd mewn ysgolion? Roedd yr undebau llafur yn dweud y bore yma nad ydynt yn cytuno â'r term 'anghyfreithlon' ond yr wythnos diwethaf cawsom wybodaeth gan Dr Reid a oedd yn honni bod hyn yn broblem. Felly, beth yw eich safbwynt chi?

Bethan Jenkins: The second question related to that: do you know of circumstances where unofficial or illegal exclusions happen in schools? The trade unions were saying this morning that they do not agree with the term 'illegal' but last week we received evidence from Dr Reid who claimed that this was a problem. What is your view?

[240] **Mr Davies:** The issue of illegal exclusions hit the press a year or two ago with a case in Cardiff where the child had been repeatedly excluded by, basically, the school telling the mother to keep him away from school. We, as an association, are not picking up that that is at

all widespread, certainly within secondary schools. It would be reprehensible and it is entirely wrong. Exclusion is a serious step and it should be taken formally and publicly, and the parents should know exactly where they stand with regard to the exclusion of their child.

[241] There might be a marginal issue related to illegal exclusions. There are sometimes situations where something will happen in the middle of the day—let us say at 12.30 p.m.—and the parent will be called in. Some schools have excluded the pupil from the next day because the child is either being held somewhere or has been taken home that afternoon, but even that would technically count as an illegal exclusion. An exclusion should date from the exact time that the child has been taken off the premises. Our information is that that concept is not at all widespread in schools. I think that schools understand their obligations very clearly in that regard and do not do it.

[242] **Rebecca Evans:** I invite Anna and then Lynne to speak, if that is okay. I would like to appeal for short answers and short questions because we are getting into the last 10 minutes.

[243] **Ms Brychan:** Rai degawdau yn ôl, roedd hwn yn arfer mwy cyffredin. Nid yw'n gwbl amhosibl y byddech yn ffeindio enghraifft nawr, ond mae'r holl ddiwylliant mewn ysgolion parthed hwn wedi newid yn sylweddol iawn, a byddwn yn synnu pe baech yn gallu dangos bod problem sylweddol yn hyn o beth o wahardd plant yn answyddogol neu'n anghyfreithlon mewn ysgolion.

Ms Brychan: Some decades ago, this was a more common practice. It is not entirely impossible that you would find an example of this now, but the whole culture in schools in relation to this has changed substantially, and I would be surprised if you could show that there is a substantial problem with regard to children being excluded from school unofficially or illegally.

[244] **Lynne Neagle:** I would like to ask about managed moves and how effectively you feel that they are being used to tackle some of these problems.

[245] **Mr Davies:** Managed moves are somewhat related to the last question as well. It is an interesting concept, because, quite often, managed moves, as they pan out in real life, are almost akin to permanent exclusions, because the crisis happens and the managed move is quickly cobbled together at that point. Managed moves work well when they are planned in advance. As a series of behaviours begin to demonstrate themselves in a child's history in school, the managed move should be considered at that point, rather than at the crisis point when a permanent exclusion is a very real likelihood and a possibility. The way in which it currently maps out in practice, when the managed move is hastily organised, in effect has the same outcome as a permanent exclusion, because the child hastily leaves one school and hastily joins another. I think that we need to do a lot more work on managed moves.

[246] **Ms Brychan:** Gellid dadlau bod eu defnydd yn cael yr un effaith ar y disgybl. Efallai mai hynny sy'n esbonio'r ffaith bod nifer y plant sy'n cael eu gwahardd yn barhaol o'r ysgol wedi mynd lawr, hynny yw, bod symudiadau wedi'u rheoli yn digwydd yn lle gwaharddiad. A yw hyn yn ddatrysiad addas ar gyfer y plentyn? Mae cynllunio ar gyfer derbyn y plentyn yn gwbl hanfodol i wneud yn siŵr eich bod yn gallu darparu'n addas ar ei gyfer ef neu ar ei chyfer hi. Mae'n rhaid i chi wybod beth yw gofynion y plentyn; mae'n rhaid sicrhau bod rhywun yn yr ysgol sydd wedi ei hyfforddi'n ddigonol ac

Ms Brychan: It is possible to argue that their use can have the same effect on the pupil. Perhaps that explains the fact that the number of pupils being permanently excluded from school has decreased, that is, that managed moves are undertaken instead of exclusion. Is this an appropriate solution for the pupil? It is vital that there is planning prior to the child being admitted in order to ensure that you can provide appropriately for his or her needs. It is vital that you know the needs of the child; it is necessary to ensure that there is someone within the school who is sufficiently and appropriately trained to provide for him or

yn addas i ddarparu ar ei gyfer ef neu ar ei chyfer hi. Os yw'n digwydd mwy neu lai dros nos, mae'n anodd ddychrynlyd i wneud hynny. Nid yw ffeindio'r bobl sydd â'r sgiliau i ddelio gyda rhai o'r disgyblion hyn yn rhwydd beth bynnag; os nad ydych yn cael rhybudd eu bod yn dod ac yn deall yn union beth sydd ei angen arnynt, mae hi lawer yn anos.

her. If it happens more or less overnight, it is really difficult to do that. It is not easy to find people who have the skills to deal with some of these pupils at the best of times; if you do not receive warning that they are coming and if you do not understand exactly what they need, it is even more difficult.

[247] **Mr Jones:** I would like to comment on that. One thing that has led to some improvement is the collaboration arrangements that have developed for 14 to 19-year-olds as part of the local curriculum planning. So, not all managed moves are a disaster, but we will not get to the stage that all managed moves are what they should be.

[248] **Suzy Davies:** I think that Anna might have answered my point. Looking at the statistics for the three local authorities in my region over the last five years—which is the period since the review was done—I can see the number of permanent exclusions has plummeted. Bearing in mind that we have heard evidence that behaviour has not improved very much, do you think that managed moves are being used to disguise a problem? These statistics do not give any indication of the outcomes of those managed moves at all.

[249] **Mr Pratt:** Managed moves are not recorded in the same way. Certainly, in my authority, we have a very effective managed moves panel that meets weekly. It discusses individual cases and resolves a good number of those cases. However, they are still children who, under the old system, would have been permanently excluded. So, maybe, although the permanent exclusion figures have dropped, it is masking an issue.

[250] **Suzy Davies:** Despite some successes?

[251] **Mr Pratt:** Yes.

[252] **Rebecca Evans:** Suzy, do you want to raise the issue of the use of data?

[253] **Suzy Davies:** Yes, and that was a data question, really. I notice that, during the same five-year period, the attendance figures have barely shifted at all. I think that one year has passed since banding came in, as well. So, my question is: have the schools placed an increased emphasis on attendance since banding?

[254] **Mr Jones:** The answer is 'yes'.

[255] **Suzy Davies:** Has it been done for the right reasons?

[256] **Mr Jones:** No. Is that a short enough answer? [*Laughter.*] There is a problem. A school with 100% attendance can show no progress; therefore, in banding terms, it will be right down at the bottom.

[257] **Suzy Davies:** It is going to have very little effect on the overall banding result; is that what you are saying?

[258] **Mr Jones:** Well, that is a negative effect.

[259] **Suzy Davies:** Yes, a negative effect; sorry.

[260] **Simon Thomas:** Rwyf am droi at **Simon Thomas:** I want to turn to methods

ddulliau ac arfau i annog presenoldeb. Fel rydych yn gwybod, mae'r Llywodraeth ar hyn o bryd yn ymgynghori ar gosbau penodedig ar gyfer rhieni. Cawsom dystiolaeth yr wythnos diwethaf gan yr Athro Reid a oedd yn awgrymu, er bod ambell i achos lle mae hwn yn gallu gweithio, mai ymyrraeth gynnar sy'n gwneud gwahaniaeth. Ble rydych yn sefyll ar yr ymgynghoriad presennol a beth yw eich barn am y defnydd o gosbau o'r fath?

[261] **Ms Brychan:** Rwy'n cytuno â'r Athro Reid mai ymyrraeth gynnar ac effeithiol yw'r modd gorau o ddelio â hyn. Rwy'n credu bod ein haelodau yn rhanedig ar y dirwyon. Hoffwn godi un peth ynglŷn â dirwyo, sy'n dod yn ôl at yr hyfforddiant: mae cadw cofrestr effeithiol yn allweddol os ydych yn bwriadu mynd â phobl i gyfraith mewn unrhyw fodd i'w cosbi am ddiffyg presenoldeb. Mae gennym dipyn o dystiolaeth sy'n awgrymu nad yw ei phwysigrwydd fel dogfen gyfreithiol yn cael ei ddeall bob amser ac nad yw presenoldeb ac absenoldeb yn cael eu cofnodi yn addas. Mae hynny, felly, yn arwain at ganlyniadau anffodus pan fydd rhywun yn trio mynd i'r afael â hynny.

[262] **Simon Thomas:** Beth am yr undeb arall?

[263] **Mr Davies:** In the view of most members, public penalties are a diversion. The crucial issue is the early intervention to attend school: the child has to want to attend school and have a sense of purpose and meaning in their life. That is addressed when you give them the right skills and capacity to engage at a young age—literacy, numeracy and a sense of self-esteem—so that they actually want to engage in the educative process, rather than not doing so. Piling in fines at a late stage in the process is, in our view, a distraction.

[264] **Mr Jones:** I will keep this short. How many parenting orders—we have sanctions already—have actually been issued in Wales? I do not know, but it might be interesting to know. Secondly, the imposition of spot fines is a policy that has been in practice in England for a number of years; what has their experience been? Again, I do not know the answer, but it might be well worth the committee trying to research that aspect.

[265] **Rebecca Evans:** I will bring Julie in now. My apologies, Julie, for the time going on.

[266] **Julie Morgan:** That is okay. I have some important questions about collaborative working, how we can improve that and what your experiences are. I was struck by what Hugh said earlier about not knowing if social services were working with children and not knowing if they were in the youth justice system. How can we address that issue? Sometimes, I tend to feel that confidentiality is something to hide behind, rather than being able to grasp an issue that a child may have.

and tools to encourage attendance. As you know, the Government is currently consulting on fixed penalties for parents. We received evidence last week from Professor Reid who suggested that, although there are some cases where this can work, it is early intervention that makes a difference. Where do you stand on the current consultation and what is your opinion on the use of such penalties?

Ms Brychan: I agree with Professor Reid that early and effective intervention is the best way to deal with this. I think that our members are split on the penalties. I would like to raise one thing about the penalties, which comes back to training: keeping an effective register is crucial if you intend to prosecute people in any way to punish them for absence. We have evidence that suggests that the importance of the register as a legal document is not always understood and that attendance and absence are not recorded appropriately. That, therefore, has unfortunate consequences when one tries to get to grips with the situation.

Simon Thomas: What about the other union?

[267] **Mr Pratt:** The integration of services is so important in terms of the work that we are trying to do. There is enormous frustration from schools. If we phone up social services because we have a major issue with a child, very often we will get put through to a helpdesk and we do not speak to the same person that we have spoken to before. You go from pillar to post and, very often, that can take an enormous amount of time and you end up with an outcome that is not right for the child. As schools, what we really need are named people with whom we can deal on a regular basis, so that we know that if we are going to social services, we will get that person, and the same holds true for the police or mental health services. Those people need to meet regularly. Where those things are starting to happen, it has a major impact.

[268] **Julie Morgan:** Are they happening in your area?

[269] **Mr Pratt:** No, they are not happening enough.

[270] **Julie Morgan:** We had an example from the previous witnesses about a group in Gwynedd that was very successful. Are there any other views on this?

[271] **Mr Davies:** There has been some very effective working in Swansea, but, again, it is patchy, from time to time and from school to school. We also welcome that, as local councils reorganise themselves, mainly in the interest of economy, the directorates are beginning to merge and are addressing more coherently the issues of people and place and so on, so that the overall needs of communities and children are being looked at. The point that I was making earlier was more to do with the belt and braces of your engagement and multi-agency work. Sometimes, you embark on it enthusiastically and you give a lot of information from the school sector, but there is a disappointment that, in fairness, their protocols that govern things like confidentiality of information do not allow the information to come back with quite the same ease or facility.

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[272] Sometimes, as school leaders, that does not help us to address the real needs of pupils, because we are unaware. There are huge things going on in their lives sometimes that totally explain why they are misbehaving on a Monday morning. They might have been through horrendous things over the weekend, and we need to be aware of those things and work together as agencies, and that needs to be systematic.

[273] **Julie Morgan:** Finally, we were told by NAHT Cymru and ASCL that the pupil deprivation grant and the school effectiveness grant had made a difference to attendance. Would you agree with that?

[274] **Ms Brychan:** Yes.

[275] **Mr Jones:** As we are NAHT Cymru and ASCL, we would agree with that. *[Laughter.]*

[276] **Mr Davies:** Schools have been able to utilise that very useful extra stream of funding to target the most vulnerable and to use strategies to bring about improvement.

[277] **Mr Pratt:** The concern is that if the financial support is not sustained and pulled, it may be difficult to sustain the things that have been put in place.

[278] **Suzy Davies:** The pupil deprivation grant is fairly new. How will you be reporting to the Government the conclusions that you have just come to in due course? How will you get your evidence over to the Government, so that the rest of us can have a look at it? I know that

you are only one year in, but—

[279] **Mr Pratt:** We are asked to report how we have spent it to our authority and, therefore, we would expect that to go back.

[280] **Suzy Davies:** Will they be able to match action to outcome?

[281] **Mr Jones:** The grant has to have an action plan. They will then be audited, so there has to be an audit report from a school back to the local authority to demonstrate how the money is being used and what the outcomes have been, and one assumes that the Directorate for Education and Skills will then be collecting that information from all the authorities.

[282] **Suzy Davies:** So, you are saying that we may have a bit of wait.

[283] **Mr Jones:** I do not know.

[284] **Mr Davies:** It also forms part of the dialogue that schools are required to have as part of the consortium arrangements around their school self-evaluation and their yearly profile. We have to comment on the use of grants and their effectiveness thereof.

[285] **Rebecca Evans:** We have come to the end of our session. I am sure that all Members will agree that it has been very useful. You will be provided with a transcript of the meeting so that you can check it for factual accuracy. Thank you very much. To draw the meeting to close, I would like to advise Members that the next meeting will take place on Wednesday, 6 February, when the committee will take further evidence for its inquiry into attendance and behaviour and will discuss the review of qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds. Thank you.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 11.33 a.m.
The meeting ended at 11.33 a.m*