

Answers issued to Members on 26 June 2009

[R] signifies that the Member has declared an interest.

[W] signifies that the question was tabled in Welsh.

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Questions to the Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): What guidance and compliance does the Welsh Assembly Government offer local authorities in Wales as to how they should use any funding from RAISE? (WAQ54392)

The Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Hutt): Year 4 of RAISE (2009-2010) marks a new phase in the programme. In December 2008, we wrote to local authorities to inform them of the new grants arrangements. They required each regional consortium to establish a RAISE co-ordinating panel to administer the grant, comprising:

- representatives of each local authority within the consortium;
- the national RAISE programme leader; and
- the regional RAISE co-ordinator for the consortium.

This panel was to agree a strategy for awarding RAISE grants for 2009-2010, focussing on key themes identified through the evaluation of the RAISE programme, to that date.

The regional panels were to refer to its regional RAISE co-ordinator and the national RAISE co-ordinator group to ensure that there was an appropriate balance of activities across Wales and within the consortium.

We stipulated that RAISE activities should:

- be collaborative and multi-agency;
- contribute to School Effectiveness Framework developments;
- be based on the best existing evidence about socio-economic disadvantage; and
- involve action research to ensure rigorously tested outcomes.

Co-ordinating panels could either invite groups of schools to draft proposals for funding or invite specific schools to participate in initiatives identified by the consortium. However, all proposals were to support capacity building activities that would lead to some publishable and presentable outcome that would benefit schools beyond the participating group.

The consortia were to determine the number and size of grants for 2009-2010, up to the total funding available for that region. However, the entire £4.5 million designated for school-based initiatives has to be allocated directly to participating schools.

Grant offer letters will include comprehensive terms and conditions for the use of the RAISE grant funding.

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): Who is eligible to apply for RAISE and what criterion would need to be fulfilled/provided for eligibility? (WAQ54393)

Jane Hutt: When the RAISE programme was launched, schools received a grant, if they had 50 or more pupils of statutory school age, of whom 20% or more are eligible for free school meals.

When the Assembly Government originally announced the RAISE programme, we made it clear that it should be regarded as a two-year programme that would allow schools to implement a strategy over an extended period. During those two years, we anticipated that schools would reflect on their practice and, on the basis of the lessons learned, develop effective approaches to social justice in education.

Consequently, we considered it inappropriate to add or remove schools from the programme at the end of the first year, even where their fsm levels crossed the 20% boundary in either direction.

Following consultation with the WLGA and ADEW, I agreed that the third and final year should focus on embedding good practice already developed, with a far greater emphasis on collaborative working, capacity building and sustainability across schools already involved.

The basis for schools' participation RAISE during 2009-2010 has been covered under WAQ54392.

Paul Davies (Preseli Pembrokeshire): How are disabled young people represented on a local level across Wales? (WAQ54404)

Jane Hutt: The inclusion of disabled children and young people in society is fundamental to our strategies, policies and guidance documents. Promoting Disability Equality in Schools for example provides guidance for teachers and head teachers on, including for example, promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people; promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people; encouraging participation by disabled people in public life; and taking steps to meet disabled people's needs.

We remain committed to the principle of giving children the right of appeal about their special educational needs and/or the right to make a claim of disability discrimination to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales. Indeed, the proposed Education (Wales) Measure will, for the first time, ensure that disabled children and young people will be able to make claims of disability discrimination to the Tribunal.

We have National Standards for Participation of Children and Young People in Wales and these have been designed to ensure that any child or young person who wants to participate in influencing the services they use is able to do so. Every department of the Welsh Assembly Government now has a divisional link officer to co-ordinate this work and we are providing training for young people to work with us to influence what we do. We are also delivering awareness raising workshops to groups of disabled young people. These two hour workshops focus on participation, identifying what it is, the benefits and barriers, why young people should get involved, the UNCRC and, importantly for your question, how they can get involved at a local level.

Disabled children and young people aged 0-25 should have opportunities and support to get involved in local decision-making on issues which affect their lives; these should be set out in the 22 Local Participation Strategies which Children and Young People's Partnerships have recently produced. Through their involvement at local level, disabled children and young people should have opportunities to get elected as either mainstream or equality representatives onto the Grand Council of Funky Dragon, the children and young people's assembly for Wales. It is important that disabled children and young people can access the support they need to participate in mainstream arrangements. In some instances, this may mean 'bottom up' approaches where additional support is provided to specific disabled children and young people networks in the first instance, hopefully leading in time to the integration of disabled young people into mainstream arrangements, for example, school councils, youth forums and Funky Dragon. There are a number of excellent examples of children and young people with disabilities being supported to participate in decision-making in school, for example, St Christopher's Special School in Wrexham.

There are a number of networks that currently exist to provide the opportunities for young disable people to have their say at a local level, for example, Clebran in North Wales and the Pembrokeshire Young Voices for Choices. There is also the Young Disabled Person's Network, which is hosted by Children in Wales.

Nick Ramsay (Monmouthshire): How much has been spent from the Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills portfolio budget on the third sector in each year from 1999? (WAQ54411)

Jane Hutt: Funding for the third sector is published annually within the Welsh Assembly Government's Third Sector Scheme Annual Report (formerly the Voluntary Sector Scheme). A summary of the funding provided to the third sector is contained within the table below. Information is currently only available for the 2001-02 to 2007-08 financial years. The information reflects the changes in remit of the Children, Education, Lifelong Learning & Skills ministerial responsibilities during the period.

| <u>Financial Year</u> | <u>Total Spent on Third Sector (£000s)</u> | |
|-----------------------|---|---------------|
| 2001-02 | Education & Training** | 864 |
| 2002-03 | Education & Training* | 21,770 |
| 2003-04 | Education & Training* | 24,702 |
| 2004-05 | Education & Training** | 4,618 |
| 2005-06 | Education & Lifelong Learning* | 25,259 |
| 2006-07 | Education & Lifelong Learning | 22,223 |
| 2007-08 | Children, Education, Lifelong Learning & Skills | 44,097 |

*Includes funding provided from the National Council for Education & Training in Wales (ELWa) prior to its merger with the Welsh Assembly Government on 1st April 2006.

**Information relating to ELWa is not available for these years.

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Jonathan Morgan (Cardiff North): How many times has the Bevan Commission met? (WAQ54398)

Jonathan Morgan (Cardiff North): What advice does the Bevan Commission provide the Minister for Health and Social Services? (WAQ54399)

Jonathan Morgan (Cardiff North): How are meetings of the Bevan Commission to maximise transparency? (WAQ54400)

Jonathan Morgan (Cardiff North): Is the advice of the Bevan Commission published? (WAQ54401)

Jonathan Morgan (Cardiff North): When is the next meeting of the Bevan Commission due to take place and where? (WAQ54402)

Jonathan Morgan (Cardiff North): What are the terms of reference of the Bevan Commission? (WAQ54403)

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Edwina Hart): The Bevan Commission has met on 12 December 2008, 6 February and 14 April 2009.

The Commission's role is set out in the Terms of Reference below.

To give advice on:

- Their view on how far the new NHS structures are delivering the purposes I set out in the restructuring documents;
- Health issues emerging that require attention; and
- Opportunities for greater or faster service improvement

To maximise transparency a dedicated website is in the process of being set up. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 7 August 2009 in Cardiff.