

Answers to the Written Assembly Questions for answer on 4 November 2009

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

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

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To ask the Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills

David Melding (South Wales Central): What percentage of pupils receiving free school meals achieved 5 or more GCSEs at grade C or above for the latest year in which figures are available. (WAQ55069)

Answer issued on 03 November 2009

In 2008, 28 per cent of pupils aged 15 and eligible for free school meals achieved 5 or more GCSEs at grade C or above or equivalent.

Further data on Key Stage 4 performance by free school meal entitlement, are available in Table 8 of the 'Academic Achievement and Entitlement to Free School Meals' statistical bulletin:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/schools2009/hdw200903191/?lang=en>

Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire): What action is the Welsh Assembly Government taking to reduce carbon emissions from university estates. (WAQ55071)

Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire): What assessment has the Welsh Assembly Government made of the Higher Education Funding Council for England statement that universities should aspire to cut emissions by 50% by 2020 against 1990 levels and 100% by 2050. (WAQ55072)

Answer issued on 05 November 2009

Over the last four years, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) has implemented a planned and sustained approach to support reduced energy and water use, and therefore carbon reduction, within the HE sector in Wales as part of its increasing focus on sustainability. This approach includes providing support and assistance at the operational level as well as seeking to ensure that environmental criteria become an important and ongoing element of strategic planning. The main actions undertaken by HEFCW to date include:

- The allocation of £4m Reaching Higher Capital in March 2007 to enable each HEI in Wales to develop a detailed system of advanced energy and water meters that enables energy and water consumption to be recorded at individual building level on a half hourly basis. This funding included the provision of technical support from an energy bureau service that monitored and advised HEIs on the data generated and their overall performance.
- The development and provision of a detailed manual of best practice on energy management.
- The formation of a partnership with The Carbon Trust Wales to provide technical advice, support and additional funding to HEIs to improve energy management and reduce carbon emissions. This has included:
 - The provision of energy audits.
 - A report on the use of variable speed drives.
 - Individual advice on the use and upgrading of Building Management Systems.
 - The provision of technical support and continuing professional development opportunities for energy managers and estates staff.
 - Financial support for feasibility studies.
 - Provision of design advice for HEIs looking to erect new buildings.
 - Five HEIs in Wales have participated in the Higher Education Carbon Management Programme.
- In 2008, HEFCW issued a circular (W08/07HE) requiring all HEIs to develop externally verified environmental management systems within three years, covering all principal environmental impacts including CO₂ emissions. This will require institutions to monitor, record and set targets for improvements in CO₂ emissions. Progress on this requirement is monitored through HEFCW's strategic planning process and through ongoing dialogue with the HE sector.

- HEFCW has monitored carbon emissions through the Estate Management Statistics since 2005/06. This approach also allows HEIs to consider and benchmark CO₂ performance against other HEIs throughout the UK.

You will also wish to be aware that the Welsh Assembly Government has recently established an Energy Spend to Save Fund through Salix Finance which has made available funding of £4m to support public sector organisations who wish to implement measures to improve carbon performance. HEFCW has written to all Vice Chancellors at Welsh HEIs drawing their attention to this funding and urging them to use this resource to implement further energy improvement measures.

In terms of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) statement on emissions reductions, HEFCW has been an observer on the Universities UK/HEFCE Sustainability Group and has had access to the research undertaken to support HEFCE's proposal.

HEFCW is currently assessing what additional measures may be required to enable the HE sector in Wales to reduce carbon emissions still further. In particular, HEFCW is considering whether further development of the existing requirement for HEIs to develop environmental management systems is required to ensure that CO₂ reduction initiatives and progress are recorded in a consistent manner with England and Scotland, and that this reporting is consistent with any requirements that may emerge from the forthcoming Welsh Assembly Government Climate Change Strategy. The issue of establishing a mandatory CO₂ target that is above any current voluntary, Welsh Assembly Government or UK target will be considered as part of this policy development.

To ask the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

Mark Isherwood (North Wales): What action do you propose to recognise the role that Holiday Home Parks play in meeting housing needs in Wales, when residents occupy their static mobile home as their main residence and the impact this has on the provision of local services. (WAQ55070)

Answer issued on 04 November 2009

The Deputy Minister for Housing (Jocelyn Davies): Such accommodation does not equate to permanent housing and should not be viewed as contributing to meeting housing needs in the conventional sense of that term.

To ask the Minister for Health and Social Services

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): What measures has the Minister taken to ensure that ventilation services are provided in a more systematic way across Wales. (WAQ55060)

Answer issued on 04 November 2009

Our Directives for Chronic Respiratory Conditions require LHBs to provide appropriate ventilation services to serve their local communities in both hospital and domiciliary settings. An audit of progress against the Directives has recently been undertaken by the National Leadership and Innovation Agency for Healthcare (NLIAH). I will shortly be discussing the results of this audit with members of Respiratory Alliance Wales to ensure that ventilation services are delivered appropriately across Wales.

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): Will the Minister list any merit schemes for NHS workers that are in place in Wales. (WAQ55061)

Answer issued on 03 November 2009

The National Clinical Excellence Award Scheme for England and Wales is part of the terms and conditions of service on consultants. It has been in place since 1948

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): How much funding has the Welsh Assembly Government spent specifically on a) Motor Neurone Disease and b) Parkinson's disease care in Wales each year since 2003. (WAQ55062)

Answer issued on 03 November 2009

This information is not held centrally

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): What steps have been taken to ensure palliative care for patients with a neurological condition is improving. (WAQ55063)

Answer issued on 04 November 2009

To improve palliative and end of life care for all patients who need it, including those with neurological conditions, we have increased our central recurrent funding to £4 million in 2009/10.

The Palliative Care Implementation Board, chaired by Baroness Ilora Finlay, has set out key priorities to develop palliative and end of life care services that meet patients' needs. Of the £4m, £2.1m is directed at hospices across Wales to support their clinical consultant-led care. Our approach is an efficient and cost effective use of public funding with patients' needs at its centre.

I wrote to Assembly Members on 16 October to explain that I had received reports from the North Wales and the Mid & South Wales Neuroscience Implementation Planning Groups and setting out the process for implementing them. Both reports make recommendations relating to palliative care services for patients with neurological conditions.

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): What is the current waiting time for adult neurological patients between their initial diagnosis with a GP and a consultant. (WAQ55064)

Answer issued on 04 November 2009

All NHS organisations in Wales are now working towards the achievement of a total waiting time of 26 weeks from primary care referral to the start of treatment by the end of December 2009.

Latest available figures can be found on the following link:

<http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/ReportFolders/reportFolders.aspx>

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): Are palliative care staff trainees attending clinics for training on specific neurological conditions. (WAQ55065)

Answer issued on 04 November 2009

All palliative care trainees rotate through placements where there is exposure to patients with neurological conditions who have specialist palliative care needs.

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): When will the Minister be making a statement on the funding for Adult Neurological Services for the next financial year. (WAQ55066)

Answer issued on 05 November 2009

Funding for Adult Neurological Services in Wales forms part of the annual budget allocations made to Local Health Boards and it is for them to prioritise, fund and manage health services for people in their area. Local Health Boards will need to take account of the recent adult neuroscience implementation planning group reports in setting out their plans for this in their annual Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategies.

To ask the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

David Melding (South Wales Central): What evaluation has the Welsh Assembly Government made relating to the Child Exploitation and Online Protections (CEOP) Centre's education programme in Wales. (WAQ55067)

Answer issued on 04 November 2009

CEOP is an executive agency of the Home Office and the Centre's education programme, which was undertaken on a UK wide basis, was funded jointly by the Home Office and the European Union.

CEOP has advised that a review by the UK National Audit Office is expected to be published shortly, although no date has been set. The Welsh Assembly Government has not undertaken an evaluation of the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) education programme

David Melding (South Wales Central): Does the Welsh Assembly Government have any intention of commissioning services to raise the awareness of parents and guardians to the risk of on-line child abuse. (WAQ55068)

Answer issued on 04 November 2009

The Welsh Assembly Government is a member of the UK Council on Child Internet Safety and is working with it on proposals for a UK-wide public awareness campaign and One Stop Shop providing e-safety advice and information to parents, children and those who work with children. We are also developing anti-bullying and e-safety resources for schools in Wales to use with parents and carers