

Answers issued to Members on 16 May 2008

[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 First Minister

Nicholas Bourne (Mid and West Wales): When did the First Minister last meet the Prime Minister, and will he give details of the meeting? (WAQ51702)

The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan): I last met the Prime Minister during his visit to Swansea on Friday 25 April.

Questions to the Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport

Nicholas Bourne (Mid and West Wales): When did the Minister last meet management at Cardiff International Airport and what was the outcome of the meeting? (WAQ51694)

The Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport (Ieuan Wyn Jones): I last met the management at Cardiff International Airport when I attended the first anniversary event of the Intra Wales Air Service on 9 May. I shall be meeting formally with the Airport management shortly.

Nicholas Bourne (Mid and West Wales): Will the Minister provide details of the number of bus services which have been withdrawn in each local authority area in each year since 1999? (WAQ51695)

The Deputy First Minister: This information is not held by the Welsh Assembly Government. Details of bus registrations and withdrawals are available from the Traffic Commissioner, Welsh Traffic Area Office, Hillcrest House, 386 Hareshill Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF.

Nicholas Bourne (Mid and West Wales): Will the Minister make a statement on Assembly Government efforts to develop more direct flights to/from Cardiff International Airport? (WAQ51703)

The Deputy First Minister: The Welsh Route Development Fund was set up to assist Cardiff International Airport in attracting new routes. At present we are supporting routes to and from Paris and Barcelona. The Fund opened in June 2006 and closed on 31 May 2007. We have not continued the scheme under the revised Route Development Fund protocol as the new guidelines contain restrictions that make the scheme unattractive to airports and operators due to the disproportionate work required to obtain a 30% contribution.

My officials are in regular contact with the Airport and airlines in targeting key routes that will generate additional economic benefits for Wales through inward investment and tourism. I shall be meeting formally with the Airport management shortly.

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

Nicholas Bourne (Mid and West Wales): How many children have left school in Wales without any formally recognised qualifications in every year since 1999? (WAQ51735)

The Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Hutt): The number of children and the percentage of 15 year olds leaving full time education in Wales without a recognised qualification show a decreasing trend. Full information reported both in terms of pupil numbers and percentage of 15 year old pupils can be found within Statistical First Release, SDR 204/2007.

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/schools-2007/hdw200712202/?lang=en>

These figures demonstrate that the education system is moving in the right direction. Achieving at least one qualification is essential to give young people a chance of a better life, a better paid job and more security for the future.

We remain determined—as set out in *The Learning Country: Vision Into Action*—that by 2010 no pupil should leave education without an approved qualification.

The draft Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure is intended to drive forward the implementation of Learning Pathways in Wales, setting out the distinct approach being taken to developing 14-19 provision. It will ensure that all learners can access their entitlement to the 6 key elements of the Learning Pathways framework.

14-19 Networks based in each local authority area and involving partners from all sectors including schools, are working hard to implement 14-19 Learning Pathways. During 2008-09 the Welsh Assembly Government has allocated £32.5m across the 14-19 Network areas to continue to take forward Learning Pathways including a range of collaborative activities aimed at reducing the numbers of pupils leaving school without qualifications.

14-19 Learning Pathways will allow all learners to have the opportunity to take vocational options as well as academic, when choosing from a wide options menu.

The Learning Coach role is also a crucial development in helping retain young people in learning. The Learning Coach role is key to supporting the learner in the learning related aspects of the whole Learning Pathway with a focus on maximising the young person’s ability to learn and the motivation to remain in learning to achieve qualifications.

Many young people also need greater personal support to help them overcome barriers to learning, remain in education and take advantage of opportunities to gain qualifications. Access to personal support is another of the key elements of Learning Pathways, which will be rolled out to all young people in Wales.

Nicholas Bourne (Mid and West Wales): What percentage of newly qualified teachers in Wales secure a teaching job in Wales within a) 12 months, b) 24 months, and c) 36 months of graduating? (WAQ51736)

Nicholas Bourne (Mid and West Wales): What percentage of newly qualified teachers in Wales secure a job outside of Wales within a) 12 months, b) 24 months, and c) 36 months of graduating? (WAQ51737)

Jane Hutt: Information about the teaching activity of Initial Teacher Training graduates from UK Higher Education Institutions at around 6 months after graduation is collected by the Higher Education Statistics Agency’s Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey. The follow-up survey at 3.5 years after graduation does not include information on teaching activity. The following table gives the teaching activity for the last three academic years.

Teaching activity and location of students completing ITT courses in Wales

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Percentage of ITT completers, with known destination, in a teaching post:			
In Wales	52%	60%	57%
Outside of Wales	28%	27%	27%
Response rate to survey for ITT completers	76%	74%	80%
Number of ITT completers (a)	2,065	2,045	2,030

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Student Record and Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education

(a) Rounded to nearest 5.

Nicholas Bourne (Mid and West Wales): How many teachers with a language specialism in Mandarin Chinese qualified in Wales in the last 12 month period for which figures are available? (WAQ51740)

Jane Hutt: From the Higher Education Statistics Agency's Student Record there were no Initial Teacher Trainee qualifiers in 2006-07 whose course was recorded as having a language specialism in Mandarin Chinese.

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

Nicholas Bourne (Mid and West Wales): What percentage of newly qualified nurses in Wales secure a nursing post in the Welsh NHS within a) 12 months, b) 24 months, and c) 36 months of graduating? (WAQ51745)

Nicholas Bourne (Mid and West Wales): What percentage of newly qualified nurses in Wales secure a nursing post outside of Wales within a) 12 months, b) 24 months, and c) 36 months of graduating? (WAQ51746)

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Edwina Hart): The specific information you request is not held centrally.

Nicholas Bourne (Mid and West Wales): Will the Minister provide details of the number of cases of hospital acquired infections in each NHS Trust in Wales in each year since 1999? (WAQ51751)

Edwina Hart: Since the instigation of the mandatory surveillance schemes in 2001, All Wales and Trust by Trust reports have been published on the National Public Health Service website.

Nick Ramsay (Monmouth): Will the Minister provide figures on the number of NHS dental practices in Torfaen? (WAQ51771)

Nick Ramsay (Monmouth): Will the Minister state how many NHS dental practices in Torfaen are currently accepting new patients? (WAQ51772)

Edwina Hart: I understand that there are 15 dental practices in Torfaen contracted to provide NHS dental services. Currently 3 of these practices are accepting new NHS patients.

Nick Ramsay (Monmouth): Will the Minister provide figures on the number of NHS dental practices in Monmouthshire? (WAQ51773)

Nick Ramsay (Monmouth): Will the Minister state how many NHS dental practices in Monmouthshire are currently accepting new patients? (WAQ51774)

Edwina Hart: I understand that there are 18 dental practices in Monmouthshire contracted to provide NHS dental services. Currently 9 of these practices are accepting new NHS patients.

Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

Nicholas Bourne (Mid and West Wales): What discussions has the minister had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the abolition of the 10p income tax rate and its implications for tackling poverty in Wales? (WAQ51732)

The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government (Brian Gibbons): I have had no discussions. The taxation system, as a reserved matter, is the responsibility of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. We have expressed our concern about the effects of the abolition of the 10p income tax rate on families in Wales with low incomes and welcome the Chancellor's recent announcement that he will be increasing the individual personal tax allowance by £600 to £6,035 for this financial year.