

Answers issued to Members on 25 November 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 Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): Will the Minister make a statement on LEA spending on school renovations? (WAQ52758)

The Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Hutt): Local Authorities take decisions on spending on school improvements, renovations and repairs based on their own condition surveys.

To fund projects, they have their own general capital funding together with capital receipts and access to prudential borrowing. In addition, the Assembly Government provides ring-fenced grant to local authorities which can only be spent on the improvement of school buildings.

Total local authority capital expenditure on education for 1999-2000 to 2006-07 to include all Assembly specific grants is £934.439m. Forecast education capital expenditure for 2007-08 is £188.453m and for 2008-09 is £199.149m

Individual education capital spend per authority can be found at the following website.
<http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=1326>

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): Will the Minister make a statement on the variation in salary for teaching assistants in Wales? (WAQ52759)

Jane Hutt: I am aware that there is currently little uniformity in pay and conditions for support staff. At present the pay and conditions of school support staff, including teaching assistants, are governed by the Local Government Employers Organisation, which sets out the guidance on Pay & Conditions of all Local Government staff. Individual local authorities set the pay rates for their staff on the basis of this guidance.

'One Wales' provides a commitment to developing a national structure for classroom assistants and consideration of pay and conditions will be part of this.

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): How many school buildings in Wales have been renovated for each year since 1999? (WAQ52760)

Jane Hutt: The information you request is not collated centrally. Information is available only for projects where the Assembly Government has contributed towards funding—we do not have data for projects funded solely by local authorities.

Since 2002, 1,724 projects have received Assembly Government School Buildings Improvement Grant, including 156 costing over £0.5m.

93 major projects from all 22 local education authorities costing £194m are already in progress or have been approved using authorities' £9m lump sum shares of SBIG which are available over the period 2005-06 to 2009-10.

In the last 10 years, there have been over 382 capital projects providing new schools, significant extensions or substantial refurbishment. Since 2002, 107 new schools have been built. Authorities forecast a further 147 major school building and redevelopment projects over the next 5 years.

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): What assessment has the Minister made of the achievement levels of small further education institutions compared with larger further education institutions? (WAQ52761)

Jane Hutt: The Assembly Government has recently introduced new definitions of learner success in further education, agreed following dialogue with institutions, Fforwm and Estyn. The first set of statistics based on these new measures, for the academic year 2006/07, was published in July 2008. All further education institutions are participating in an Assembly-Government-funded project to benchmark their learner outcomes and financial performance, and detailed benchmarks have just been issued for this purpose.

As yet, these new measures have not been used by the Assembly Government to carry out any comparative analysis of institutions' performance. We have made a commitment to give institutions more time to review and amend their data before it is used for this purpose by the Assembly Government or Estyn. These assessments will start in 2009 but will be based on benchmarking of each institution's performance against agreed standards; we do not publish league tables of education providers in Wales.

However, comparisons carried out in the past, based on inspection grades, have shown no direct correlation between institutions' size and the standards attained by learners.

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): Will the Minister make a statement on discipline in further Education Institutions? (WAQ52762)

Jane Hutt: Further Education Institutes as independent corporations have their own discipline policies for both staff and students and are responsible for implementing them.

Additionally, as part of their inspection process, Estyn assess the quality of support and guidance for learners and the provision of opportunities for additional learning need.

In the case of staff discipline, the procedures are agreed with the staff unions and Further Education Institutions have to comply with employment law.

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): How many further international students are currently studying for qualifications at each further education institution in Wales? (WAQ52763)

Jane Hutt: The number of non-UK domiciled students enrolled at Welsh FEIs are given in the table below, for 2006/07 (the latest published statistics).

Number of learners enrolled at FE institutions and subsidiaries 2007-07 by country of domicile grouping

Institution	UK-domiciled learners	Non-UK-domiciled learners	Total
Barry College	8,735	10	8,745
Bridgend College	11,530	0	11,530
Coleg Sir Gar	10,430	10	10,435
Coleg Ceredigion	3,795	25	3,825
Deeside College	22,325	10	22,335
Coleg Glan Hafren	13,580	80	13,660
Gorseinon College	6,105	*	6,105
Coleg Gwent	31,640	50	31,695
Coleg Llandrillo	20,570	15	20,585
Coleg Llysfasi	4,135	520	4,655
Coleg Meirion Dwyfor	3,305	*	3,305

Merthyr Tydfil College —WBL subsidiary only	615	0	615
Pembrokeshire College	10,510	105	10,615
Coleg Morgannwg	12,010	85	12,100
Coleg Powys	6,500	*	6,505
St David's Catholic College	1,295	0	1,295
Swansea College	16,340	75	16,415
Welsh College of Horticulture	4,585	*	4,590
Yale College	14,865	60	14,925
Yatrad Mynach College	10,225	0	10,225
WEA South	6,545	0	6,545
YMCA	3,415	0	3,415
Coleg Menai	9,125	0	9,125
Neath Port Talbot College	15,110	5	15,120
Coleg Harlech/WEA (North)	4,800	*	4,800
Total (including any multiple counting between providers)	252,090	1,065	253,155

Coverage: All further education institutions receiving funding from WAG-DCELLS

Notes

1. For the purpose of this table, the UK column also includes a small number of learners from the Channel islands.
2. Counts are based on providers' own learner identifiers and therefore include some multiple-counting between providers.
3. Includes full-time, part-time and work-based learners.
4. Includes WBL subsidiaries of FE institutions.
5. Includes LEA community learning where there is a formal enrolment with an FE institution.
6. Numbers greater than 0 and less than 5 have been replaced by *. Other figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and there may be slight discrepancies between the sums of constituent items and the independently rounded totals.

Source: LLWR (Lifelong Learning Wales Record) post-16 database version: 21 April 2008.

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): How much has each further education institution spent on administration for each year since 1999? (WAQ52764)

Jane Hutt: Information is taken from the Finance Record received from the further education institutions each year, which is a copy of their financial statements. The accounting year runs from the 1st August to 31st July.

Guidance for completion of the record states that the following should be included in Administration and Central Services costs.

Non Pay Costs

IT costs, Audit costs, Legal fees, Non building insurance, Bad debt provision, Any other costs.

Pay Costs

Pay and costs of other emoluments of staff such as the principal, other senior managers and support staff, and those wholly engaged in administrative computing work.

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): Is the Minister able to provide a breakdown for the £10.5 million designated for further education? (WAQ52766)

Jane Hutt: As final budgets have yet to be published, the post 16 allocations have not been finalised. It is intended that Local Authority and Further Education Institutions will be informed of the allocations in January 2009. Therefore, a breakdown of the budget cannot yet be provided.

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): What assessment has the Minister made of any potential increase in the number of FE students, and is this represented in the budget forecast? (WAQ52767)

Jane Hutt: Further Education (FE) funding, as with all Post-16 funding, is funded via the National Planning and Funding System (NPFS). The NPFS allocates funds based on activity rather than headcount and accounts for any growth in 16-18 activity in both FE and Local Authority funding. Post 19 activity is managed by the FE Institutions as autonomous bodies to reflect the needs and demands of the locality to which they deliver.

Initiatives such as the fees policy under the Skills that Work for Wales will underpin the deployment post 19 to ensure public funding is better targeted in response to demand.

Andrew R.T. Davies (South Wales Central): How much money has been spent on refurbishing further education buildings for each year since 1999? (WAQ52768)

Jane Hutt: The information you request is not held centrally as we do not have the data on how much money in total is spent each year on refurbishing further education buildings.

Information is available with respect to the total amount of capital funding deployed to FEIs by the Assembly Government which over the last nine financial years has been circa £148m. Capital expenditure that has been deployed by the Assembly Government in each financial year is provided in the table below:

Financial Year	Capital Fund
2000/01	£9.81m
2001/02	£20.42m
2002/03	£10.70m
2003/04	£11.00m
2004/05	£24.88m
2005/06	£16.13m
2006/07*	£22.38m
2007/08*	£14.15m
2008/09*	£18.97m
Total	£148.44m

* Excludes any capital funds secured by FEIs in relation to 14-19 Learning Pathways.

This table details the sources of funding that supports major works, new buildings in addition to refurbishments.

The capital funds deployed by the Assembly Government are used as a source of funding for other capital activities other than the refurbishment of further education buildings; for the construction of new buildings; maintenance and repairs works to existing building stock; to address specific works required by

legislation, such as the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA); and to support the acquisition of educational equipment.

Further Education Institutions (FEIs) also use funding from their own reserves to carry out refurbishment works together with any additional funding from capital receipts, borrowing and European funding. This varies from project to project but typically Assembly Government resources are matched by FEIs' own investment.

Andrew R,T, Davies (South Wales Central): How many pupils have been excluded because of bullying in primary and secondary schools in Wales and would the Minister provide a breakdown for each LEA in Wales for each year since 1999? (WAQ52777)

Jane Hutt: The information sought on permanent and fixed-term exclusions at LEA level and which relates to occurrences and not to individual pupils was first collected by the Assembly Government in 2003 and is as follows:

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Isle of Anglesey	*	*	7	9	*
Gwynedd	6	*	*	0	19
Conwy	8	20	26	25	11
Denbighshire	8	16	9	8	16
Flintshire	22	30	15	26	12
Wrexham	12	20	13	30	17
Powys	7	8	21	6	9
Ceredigion	28	12	12	12	*
Pembrokeshire	12	14	*	10	11
Carmarthenshire	18	24	10	17	13
Swansea	30	28	175	191	140
Neath Port Talbot	31	47	20	15	13
Bridgend	13	*	34	19	22
The Vale of Glamorgan	10	13	7	11	*
Rhondda Cynon Taf	30	42	26	31	16
Merthyr Tydfil	8	7	19	10	6
Caerphilly	47	45	29	25	16
Blaenau Gwent	13	11	19	15	*
Torfaen	20	12	10	11	14
Monmouthshire	*	*	7	14	*
Newport	20	23	22	25	18
Cardiff	42	84	74	50	60
Wales	393	469	563	560	429

*Where the number of pupils is five or less, but greater than zero, the number is suppressed to protect confidentiality.

Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

David Melding (South Wales Central): Will the Minister make a statement on the Bercow Report and its implications for speech therapy services for young people in Wales? (WAQ52797)

The Minister for Health and Social Services (Edwina Hart): John Bercow's review of 'Services for Children and Young People with Speech, Language and Communication Difficulties', reports specifically on services in England. We are, however, prepared to consider its recommendations to see whether any should apply to Wales.

David Lloyd (South Wales West): Will the Minister make a statement on the continuation of current local enhanced services at present levels by local health boards within the 7 new larger health boards? (WAQ52805)

Edwina Hart: The legal framework for the new NHS has yet to be established.

Chris Franks (South Wales Central): What provision is the Welsh Assembly Government making to provide adequate care and facilities for people detained by the police under section 136 of the Mental Health Act? (WAQ52806)

Edwina Hart: Decisions by police officers to use section 136 are based upon the presentation and needs of the individual. The Welsh Assembly Government's new Mental Health Act Code of Practice makes it clear that a person thought to be suffering from a mental disorder should be detained in a hospital if possible. Only in exceptional circumstances would a police station be the most appropriate place for them to be examined and assessed.

In these extreme circumstances every effort should be made to ensure that the police station is only used where it is absolutely necessary to provide short-term containment, for example where the person is considered to be too violent for the available hospital, or they pose a risk to other patients or staff.

Questions to the Minister for Heritage

Eleanor Burnham (North Wales): Will the Minister explain the exact meaning and intention behind the point on page 35 of the 'One Wales' document which states, 'We will continue research work into population shifts in order to promote balanced population in all parts of Wales'? (WAQ52773)

The Minister for Heritage (Alun Ffred Jones): The Office of the Chief Social Research Officer will be carrying out research to support this 'One Wales' commitment. The research will use existing data sources to map demographic change across Wales, including rural areas. It will also explore the potential for using geo-demographic methods to identify and better understand how key demographic groups (such as migrants, students, newly formed households, retired households) are impacting on public policy and service delivery. The research will complement related Welsh Assembly Government research, such as the research on deep rural areas being commissioned by the Wales Rural Observatory on behalf of the Rural Affairs Department. The research will report by summer 2009.

Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): Will the Minister detail the percentage of invoices received by public bodies for which they are responsible that are paid within 30 days, within 40 days and within 2 months, and provide figures for each of the previous three years? (WAQ52720)

Substantive answer following holding reply.

The Minister for Rural Affairs (Elin Jones): My officials and I seek to hold Forestry Commission Wales responsible for the public sector benchmark of 95% of invoices to be paid within 30 days.

Performance against this target is reported in their annual accounts. Performance against other targets is not recorded by the Welsh Assembly Government.

Brynle Williams (North Wales): What percentage of payments under the 2008 Single Payment Scheme does the Minister expect to have been paid by 25th December 2008, broken down by (a) value and (b) claimants? (WAQ 52771)

Elin Jones: We expect to pay the large majority of claimants by 25 December 2008. The percentage value of payments has a tendency to run slightly behind the percentage of claims paid until almost all the claims are paid.

Questions to the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

Mike German (South Wales East): What progress has been made on the One Wales commitment to (a) consider evidence for the devolution of the criminal justice system in the context of devolution of funding and (b) moves to establish a single administration of justice in Wales and when will the conclusions be published? (WAQ52782)

The Minister for Social Justice and Local Government (Brian Gibbons): The Cabinet has given some preliminary thought to this issue. It has agreed to seek further information in advance of further deliberation.