



OFFICIAL REPORT
AITHISG OIFIGEIL

Education and Skills Committee

Wednesday 14 September 2016

Session 5



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

© Parliamentary copyright. Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body

Information on the Scottish Parliament's copyright policy can be found on the website - www.parliament.scot or by contacting Public Information on 0131 348 5000

Wednesday 14 September 2016

CONTENTS

	Col.
DECISION ON TAKING BUSINESS IN PRIVATE	1
SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION	2
Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Part 4 and Part 5 Complaints)	
Revocation Order 2016 [Draft]	2
Named Persons (Training, Qualifications, Experience and Position) and the Child's Plan (Scotland)	
Revocation Order 2016 (SSI 2016/234)	3
NAMED PERSONS (UPDATE)	4
ATTAINMENT	25

EDUCATION AND SKILLS COMMITTEE

4th Meeting 2016, Session 5

CONVENER

*James Dornan (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)

DEPUTY CONVENER

*Johann Lamont (Glasgow) (Lab)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Colin Beattie (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)

*Ross Greer (West Scotland) (Green)

*Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)

*Richard Lochhead (Moray) (SNP)

*Fulton MacGregor (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)

*Gillian Martin (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)

*Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (LD)

*Liz Smith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)

*Ross Thomson (North East Scotland) (Con)

*attended

THE FOLLOWING ALSO PARTICIPATED:

Paul Clancy (Dundee City Council)

Lindsay Law (Scottish Parent Teacher Council)

Graeme Logan (Education Scotland)

Jamie Petrie (Broomhouse Primary School)

John Swinney (Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills)

CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

Roz Thomson

LOCATION

The Robert Burns Room (CR1)

Scottish Parliament

Education and Skills Committee

Wednesday 14 September 2016

[The Convener opened the meeting at 09:00]

Decision on Taking Business in Private

The Convener (James Dornan): I welcome everyone to the Education and Skills Committee's fourth meeting in 2016. I remind everyone who is present to turn off mobile phones, as they can interfere with the sound system.

Agenda item 1 is consideration of whether to take in private item 8, which is discussion of the committee's working practices. Do we agree to take that item in private?

Members indicated agreement.

Subordinate Legislation

Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Part 4 and Part 5 Complaints) Revocation Order 2016 [Draft]

09:00

The Convener: Item 2 is evidence on the order. I welcome John Swinney, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, and Government officials Hannah Keates, who is from the better life chances unit, and Elizabeth Blair, who is from the food, children, education, health and social care solicitors.

Good morning. I invite the cabinet secretary to make opening comments.

The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills (John Swinney): The primary purpose of the revocation order is to revoke the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Part 4 and Part 5 Complaints) Order 2016, which Parliament considered in the previous session. The original order was made under the powers in sections 30 and 43 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. Those sections specify that the Scottish ministers may by order make provision about the making, consideration and determination of complaints that concern the exercise of functions that are conferred by or under parts 4 and 5 of the 2014 act. As parts 4 and 5 had been intended to be commenced on 31 August this year, the order set out the complaints process in relation to the named person service and the child's plan that would commence with the other provisions in those parts.

On 28 July, the Supreme Court ruled that the information-sharing provisions in part 4 of the 2014 act were incompatible with article 8 of the European convention on human rights and that changes were needed to make those provisions compatible with the article. That decision was given during the parliamentary recess, but it required urgent action. As a result, I wrote to the Parliament—and to the convener—to set out my intention to suspend commencement and introduce the necessary commencement partial revocation order for parts 4 and 5 of the act as a whole. As a result, those parts of the act did not commence on 31 August.

As parts 4 and 5 did not commence, it is necessary to revoke the complaints order. It is clear that the complaints process cannot be put in place when the duties under those parts of the act have not been commenced.

No consultation has taken place on the revocation order and no additional financial

implications arise from it. I am happy to answer any questions.

The Convener: Members have no questions, so we will move to item 3, which is the formal debate on motion S5M-01327, which is in the cabinet secretary's name. I remind everyone that officials are not permitted to contribute to the formal debate.

Motion moved,

That the Education and Skills Committee recommends that the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Part 4 and Part 5 Complaints) Revocation Order 2016 [draft] be approved.—[*John Swinney*]

Motion agreed to.

The Convener: The committee must report to Parliament on the order. Are members content for me as convener to sign off a short and factual report?

Members *indicated agreement.*

Named Persons (Training, Qualifications, Experience and Position) and the Child's Plan (Scotland) Revocation Order 2016 (SSI 2016/234)

The Convener: Item 4 is consideration of a negative instrument that will come into force unless Parliament agrees to a motion to annul it. No motion to annul has been lodged. Do members have any comments on the order? There are no comments.

Named Persons (Update)

09:03

The Convener: Under item 5, the committee seeks an update on the named persons policy, as a follow-up to the ministerial statement that the cabinet secretary made last week. We will move on to questions from members shortly, but I understand that the cabinet secretary wishes to make a brief opening statement.

John Swinney: I leave my comments as they were made to Parliament on Thursday. I am happy to answer members' questions.

The Convener: It is often mentioned that Highland Council runs a similar scheme to the named person scheme and has had a single-point-of-contact approach in place for a number of years. The reports about the Highland scheme are that it has resulted in positive outcomes, such as fewer children being in care, and in better working practices. Given that, why has it been difficult to get across to the public what I am sure you consider to be the potentially positive returns from the named person scheme? Following the latest legal judgment, what advice has been given to local authorities such as Highland Council that have already started to nominate named persons and put in place arrangements for them to be a single point of contact?

John Swinney: There are two points in that question. The first relates to the public understanding and acceptance of the named person concept. There has been an active political debate around the named person, and that is obviously a contested concept. I disagree fundamentally with many things that have been said in that debate that have been marshalled in opposition to the concept of the named person policy.

In the statement that I made to Parliament last Thursday, I set out what I consider to be the proper context within which the named person policy has been developed. That context is the policy approach that has been shared between a number of different Administrations and supported by many parliamentary committees—indeed, it was reflected in the thinking and priorities of the Christie commission—that is, that we should have a significant emphasis on preventative interventions to avoid difficulties emerging and becoming serious challenges for individuals in our society. That comes through in the thinking around policy on young people and getting it right for every child.

The challenge for me is to get across the message that the named person, as a point of contact to provide assistance and support to

individuals who might face difficulty, is a policy approach enshrined in the ethos of getting it right for every child. We have to stress the advantages of that to individuals in Scotland. That will dominate the communication and dialogue that I take forward.

The evidence is strong on the effectiveness of the named person approach. I recounted in my statement to Parliament last week the reduction in referrals to the children's panel and the reduction in the acceleration or intensification of cases as a consequence of intervention. I think that that evidence justifies the policy approach that has been taken.

Finally, on the existing legal framework, the provisions of parts 4 and 5 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 have not come into force, so it is important that any schemes that are taken forward must be compatible with the existing legal framework within which such schemes must operate. As I said in Parliament last Thursday, there is a requirement for such provisions to be embedded in the existing legislation around the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Data Protection Act 1998, and any public authority must design a scheme that is compatible with that approach. That forms the guidance to public authorities that the Government has issued on those questions.

Richard Lochhead (Moray) (SNP): I want to pick up on the Highland experience. Is there evidence that, in the Highlands, there is the same kind of opposition that some people are expressing over the national roll-out of named person?

John Swinney: There have clearly been comments on and contributions to the debate right across the country, and I do not think that the Highland area will have been in any way exempted from that. However, what has been clear from the Highland experience, if we look at the data, is that the number of referrals to the children's reporter in Highland dropped from 2,335 in 2007 to 744—a drop of 68 per cent, which is a quite remarkable reduction in the number of referrals. I attribute that to the better alignment and connection of public services that is driven by the named person policy context. Highland has been a pioneer in that respect. There is a substantial advantage that is demonstrated by that data, which shows the performance of the initiative.

Liz Smith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con): You said in the chamber—and you repeated today—that current practice must be in line with data protection legislation and the Human Rights Act 1998. Are you wholly confident that any local authority that has implemented the named person

policy, including the data sharing aspect, has not acted unlawfully?

John Swinney: Yes, because all local authorities must act within the law.

Liz Smith: Okay.

You have said that the Supreme Court's view is that the policy's overarching aim is perfectly "legitimate and benign". You also said that no change to current policy is required, but surely that cannot be correct, when one aspect of the policy has been ruled unlawful.

John Swinney: The point that you are missing is that we are putting new provisions into statute. The point—which I tried to get across in my statement to Parliament last Thursday—is that the Government is advancing a new legal framework in which the policy will be delivered, which requires to meet all the tests that the Supreme Court applied to the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. It is the legal framework that must be compatible with data protection and human rights legislation; existing arrangements must routinely be compatible with that legislation if they are to operate satisfactorily.

Liz Smith: This morning we revoked provisions relating to the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. Surely that is because part of the 2014 act has been ruled unlawful. Does that not signify that there must be some policy change?

John Swinney: No. That is not my reading of the Supreme Court judgment. The Supreme Court judgment—and I explained to the Parliament why I think that the Supreme Court had this in mind—is that there is a requirement to set out the information-sharing provisions in accordance with law. I accept that the provisions that we put in place in the 2014 act do not meet that test, because some of the definitions that are material to this debate are not specified in law. They are specified in guidance, but they do not have the authority of law, so I must ensure that they have that authority of law.

The Supreme Court also said that it is important that we make all the connections in the legal framework and set them out in accordance with law. That is what we must do. In essence, we must not leave those connections to be made by members of the public.

The point on which the Supreme Court anchored its judgment—the point of greatest significance, in my view—is its argument that the provisions need to be set out in accordance with law. That is the challenge to which the Government must respond, and as I explained in the Parliament last Thursday, that theme of analysis—if I can call it that—from the Supreme

Court has emerged clearly from the judgments that postdate the passing of the 2014 act by the Scottish Parliament.

Liz Smith: Thank you. Let me pick up on two points. First, the Supreme Court did not just rule on the data sharing aspect; it made comments about proportionality. It said that the approach

“is likely often to be disproportionate.”

There is therefore concern that the named person policy might be intrusive and disproportionate, because of the lack of clarity in the law. How can that be addressed?

John Swinney: I think that that is largely the issue to which I referred, that is, the necessity of the matter being specified in law. I take the view that the guidance that is in place addresses the issue of proportionality and reassures people about when it will be appropriate for certain things to be done—that was my position before the Supreme Court judgment. The Supreme Court said that that must be specified in accordance with law.

That is part of the work that must be done so that members of the public can be clear—it is not as much about our being clear as it is about the public being clear—about how the question of proportionality will be handled. As I said, it will be handled in accordance with law, as a consequence of the provisions that we bring forward.

09:15

Liz Smith: Does that mean that there is an acceptance that the concept of wellbeing is a problem? It is a nice concept, which everybody moves towards, but it is not defined properly and it is certainly not defined in law. Do you accept that because we made that move to talk about “wellbeing” instead of using the definition of “welfare”, which is more common in Scots law, the threshold for intervention was seen to be very much lower and therefore the professionals who were dealing with named person policy were unsure of the territory on which they found themselves and did not know whether they should intervene? I have to say that I would struggle to define wellbeing, even given the safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included—SHANARRI—indicators and all the information and guidance that goes with them.

The logical conclusion, cabinet secretary, is that you will have to define wellbeing in law. Is that your intention? How would you go about doing that?

John Swinney: There is a lot in that question, so I will take time and care to explore different parts of it.

The committee will forgive me if I go over ground that I have already rehearsed with Parliament in my statement, but it is important that I do so for completeness. I completely disagree with Liz Smith about it being wrong to include wellbeing in people’s judgments, as opposed to them being all about welfare. The Supreme Court judgment is crystal clear, the framework around welfare and child protection in law in Scotland is crystal clear, and the judgment helpfully codifies all that for us. The welfare provisions within law are clearly expressed to the satisfaction of the Supreme Court and that should give members of the public who are anxious about child protection issues a lot of confidence about our legal framework.

If defining “wellbeing” was our intention, there would be no need to proceed with a named person policy. In my view, the policy is about a lower threshold. It is about making a preventative intervention by identifying the support that is required to assist young people if they are facing difficulties in our society, so that we can make sure that that support is made available earlier and interventions are delivered to prevent difficulties from having more serious implications for young people.

A welfare concern is a significant and serious intervention. We know what it means and what it looks like; it is tabulated. Wellbeing is about making sure that we intervene as early as possible to stop problems becoming more serious. That is why, in answer to the convener earlier, I anchored my view of the role of the named person policy in the GIRFEC agenda. For me, there is a lower threshold of activity that the named person must be focused on, because it is about identifying issues that might become more serious if they are not addressed.

That brings me to the question of definition. I have tried to address your question about the threshold. Wellbeing is defined in guidance, but I accept that that is not law, so it has to be set out in a fashion that will be robust and will pass the test that the Supreme Court has applied, which is that the provisions must be set out in accordance with law. That will therefore give a clearer legal framework within which the named person policy can be deployed in a way that is consistent with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and in accordance with the Supreme Court judgment.

The arguments around the role of the named person are about ensuring that the person can be available to support families and make the connections that are needed to provide the required support and interventions. That will be about an awful lot more than welfare; it will be

about supporting the wellbeing of young people in our society.

Liz Smith: Thank you for the detailed explanation. The issue on which I think that we have a strong difference of opinion relates to what we hear from the practitioners who are very concerned about the implementation of the named person policy. As you have accepted, there is a much lower threshold, and wellbeing is the determining factor. Because this is a universal policy, which covers every child, and because the threshold is so low and the paperwork and the assessment, which is based on the SHANARRI indicators and all the accompanying guidance, are so substantial, the expectation is that casework will increase. How will you address that, especially as you have given a commitment in Parliament to reduce teachers' workloads?

John Swinney: Where there is a requirement for support, it is essential that that is clearly tabulated and understood, to enable that support to be delivered to a young person, but I do not see the necessity for a cottage industry of bureaucracy to be created around that. I understand the unease of practitioners and others—you have fuelled some of this debate, as part of the wider political debate—but no part of the policy proposition makes it necessary to create vast bureaucracies to summarise an assessment of every single child in the country. That is not the point of this policy.

What this policy is about is empowering trusted public servants—be they health visitors or teachers, whom we trust to exercise, every day of the week, the responsibilities of their role to nurture and develop our children—to require support to be available to assist young people if they need it. Not everybody requires support, but some do, and I want to ensure that young people get support as early as they can. That way we can avoid the accumulation of difficulties that undoubtedly happens for some young people. That is why I take a different view. I tried to address that point in my answer to Daniel Johnson in Parliament last week.

I do not want us to think about the named person provision as a compartmentalised extra responsibility. The teachers and health visitors that I have talked to look at their case load and at the young people that they interact with all the time, to assess the young people's needs and requirements. The named person provision simply empowers those individuals to deliver, as early as possible, what those young people require.

Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab): The direction of questioning that we have heard so far has neatly encapsulated the situation. We heard a detailed set of questions from Liz Smith about the legal aspects and we started with the

convener's line of questioning, which was about perception. While we have a pause due to the Supreme Court's judgment, the situation that we are faced with and that we need to address is just as much about public perception and trust as it is about the legal matters.

I welcome the comments that you made in your statement about an intense period of engagement, and that the Scottish Information Commissioner and Children and Young People's Commissioner will lead that review. Will the scope of that work be confined to the legal points that are raised by the Supreme Court, or will it seek to address the wider points about public confidence and trust in the system?

John Swinney: I accept unreservedly the point about public trust and confidence in the system, and the importance of tackling that. I do not think that that is the responsibility of the children's or information commissioners, or of any one apart from me; I accept that responsibility.

It is important that ministers are able properly and fully to build public confidence in what I think is the correct policy. For that reason, I set out to Parliament last week why I think that the policy is justifiable and appropriate, and I anchored it within the GIRFEC agenda. As I have said, I am taking on that responsibility, and it is for me and other ministers to ensure that it is fulfilled.

In relation to the substance of Mr Johnson's question about scope, I will, as an absolute minimum, address properly and fully the issues that are raised by the Supreme Court judgment, because I think that it is important to keep the matter in perspective. The Supreme Court has said what it has said about information and data sharing, but it has not said anything else about the scheme. That is the requirement that it has put in place, and I have to address that issue.

As part of the work that I will take forward to build public confidence, I will be mindful of what will be helpful in that respect. If changes to the scheme or other provisions are promoted, I will, as I have indicated to Parliament, give them consideration.

Daniel Johnson: What, then, will be the scope of the work of the Scottish Information Commissioner and the children's commissioner? Will it be published? What framework and timeline are they working to?

John Swinney: As I have said to Parliament, I will undertake the dialogue, along with the Minister for Childcare and Early Years, over the course of the next three months. That will form and frame the decisions that the Government will then take about the scheme's implementation. I will draw on the input of the children's and information commissioners, but I should point out that I am not

commissioning them to do anything; I am not entitled to do so. Instead, I will invite their input and draw on that and their expertise. Obviously, they have a lot to contribute to the discussion from their respective specific policy interests, so I will listen carefully to their thoughts, as I will to the contributions of many others.

Daniel Johnson: The two points clearly come together not only in the area of data sharing. In paragraph 107 of its judgment, the Supreme Court refers to the nature of information sharing and suggests that there should be legally binding guidance or subordinate legislation on when people should be told that information is being shared and when consent should be sought. That, I think, brings people's concerns to a head. As a parent myself, I support the policy principles, but I had a nagging concern about things being shared with authorities and my not knowing about it. What do you see as being the direction that we should be going in and the solution that we should be putting in place? How will that be communicated?

Furthermore, to what extent will the system be voluntary? I feel that clarity is lacking on the extent to which participation in the scheme and communication with the named person will be voluntary, and how binding the named person's actions will be on parents.

John Swinney: In response to Mr Johnson's question, I first point out that his reference to paragraph 107 essentially brings out some of the issues with regard to consent, which I consider to be a material issue that must be addressed if we are to address satisfactorily the Supreme Court judgment. Going back to his question about scope, I say that I consider that to be in the scope of the work to be undertaken.

Mr Johnson then asked me to set out what I consider to be the answers to this question. The committee will have to forgive me; I think that it would be slightly premature of me to provide all the answers just before I embark on an intensive three-month dialogue to establish exactly how that might be undertaken. I am not being flippant—I have to give due thought and consideration in order to ensure that the issues are properly addressed. After all, I want to address them satisfactorily for the Supreme Court. It is a responsibility that I take immensely seriously.

09:30

The final point that I would make is a general observation about the named person policy. The Supreme Court says that under the provisions that we had put in place it would have been possible for members of the public not to participate in the named person policy, but it also made the point that that is perhaps not as clear as it could be.

That is one of the difficulties that we have had around communication of the policy and acceptance of it; it has caused unease among some members of the public, as part of the wider political debate. I consider those issues to be very much in the scope of the work that I will take forward.

Daniel Johnson: I will pick up on some of your final comments to Liz Smith about not wanting to create a "cottage industry" of support. I take on board your points and I agree with you that teachers, health visitors and everyone who works with children need to focus on their holistic wellbeing and to support them in those terms. However, in the discussions that I have been having with teachers and health visitors, there has been concern about not just what might happen but the substantial amount of work that has already been created where the policy has been implemented. I have been talking to teachers in schools where teaching assistants are, in essence, working full time on dealing with the information that is coming in. Likewise, when I talk to health visitors, I hear that the automatic triggering of information from nursery schools when certain situations happen means that a substantial amount of information will be coming their way. Health visitors, as I understand it, have no administrative support.

Although I understand the holistic nature of the policy and the intent behind it—in many ways I agree with it—the reality is that it creates bureaucracy and work, and we need to resource that. We do not wish to create a cottage industry of support, but that does not mean that substantial work is not already being created.

John Swinney: I will reiterate what I said in my response to Liz Smith: I have no desire to create a cottage industry. That will be very much on my mind when we look at how we implement and deliver the policy at operational level.

I will try to work my way through some of the relevant issues. It is part of the role and responsibility of our health visitors and teachers to look out for the wellbeing of the young people for whom they have a duty of care. That is what they do every day—it is what I see in schools and it is what I see health visitors doing around the country. We are not asking health visitors and teachers to do anything that they are not already doing, in terms of looking out for young people's wellbeing. That is maybe not the most precise parliamentary term, but members will understand the point that I am making.

We want to ensure that when the named person has a concern they are able ensure that the child receives the support that he or she needs, and that there is a point of contact where people can go to obtain that support. That is not always clear

in the system. I made the point in Parliament last week that members of the public come to me to ask me to get public services connected for them, not to say how wonderfully connected public services are.

I accept that if our mandate in the system was, let us say, that a weekly report must be filled out on the wellbeing of every child in a school, that would be a cottage industry of bureaucracy. I will not ask for that. I want this to be a proper opportunity to ensure that professionals in whom we already place our trust to support and nurture our children are able to access the resources and support that they need to address the needs of young people.

Colin Beattie (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP): Early on in the discussion, the cabinet secretary mentioned the rather extreme positions that are sometimes taken in relation to the named person policy. A few minutes ago, you partly answered the question that I was going to ask. Surely many of the elements of the named person policy are already in place, as you correctly said. There are teachers, health visitors and so on who support children and report anything that they see that is not up to what they expect. Surely the named person scheme is simply a joining up of processes and a putting in place of good practice.

John Swinney: It is that, but it is also empowering individuals who are key contact points for young people with the ability to connect public services in order to deliver interventions that support those young people and address difficulties. It is essentially a resource that is available to individuals and families to support them in their times of difficulty and to ensure that their needs are adequately and fully addressed.

Colin Beattie: Is there then a need for an escalation process in each council to accommodate the issues as they come up?

John Swinney: Undoubtedly, measures will need to be taken in individual circumstances to meet the needs of young people. Clearly, if a named person finds it difficult to make connections with the required services, there might be a need to seek further support within organisations. Crucially, the named person policy will empower individuals on the front line of our public services to fulfil that role.

Colin Beattie: I presume that the escalation process is not new—it should be what is in place already. Teachers and others who are involved with children should be using it already, so that is not an additional requirement.

John Swinney: The processes already exist in public authorities and would be followed as part of the process that we are discussing.

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (LD): After the engagement exercise, what will be in law that is not currently in law?

John Swinney: It is difficult for me to give a comprehensive answer to that question. Essentially, I have to ensure that the provisions that the Supreme Court believes need to be codified in law are the ones that are codified in law, as a minimum. I consider those to be the information sharing provisions, the definition of wellbeing and the definition of circumstances and arrangements around the necessity or otherwise to obtain consent for any particular intervention. Those are the three elements that I foresee being in law, but I have to be mindful of the test that the Supreme Court has set. The thinking behind its judgment is that those issues need to be codified in accordance with the law, and I have to be mindful of the need to address that satisfactorily.

Tavish Scott: So, at least, those three areas, which are currently dealt with in guidance, will become law at some stage next year.

John Swinney: That will be subject to the agreement of Parliament.

Tavish Scott: Indeed. There might be some other areas that come up in the engagement exercise that you are undertaking. You have not closed your mind, as I think you said to colleagues earlier.

I have some specific questions about the Supreme Court judgment. Paragraph 84 says:

“there is no statutory requirement, qualified or otherwise, to inform the parents of a child about the sharing of information.”

I presume that that is exactly the point that you have just made and that that will be taken care of.

John Swinney: Yes.

Tavish Scott: My other point, which I asked you about last week, is on paragraph 95. Like Daniel Johnson, I am a parent, and that is the paragraph that gives me the most concern. It states:

“parents will be given the impression that they must accept the advice or services which they are offered and ... that their failure to co-operate ... will be taken to be evidence of a risk of harm.”

I confess that that paragraph worries me as a parliamentarian but much more as a parent. Will that be addressed?

John Swinney: Clause 95 of the judgment relates to what has been a material question in the debate until now, which is whether it is possible for families to decide not to engage with the named person or not to pursue services. I have expressed the view that existing provisions that the Government and Parliament have put in place enable that. Obviously, the Supreme Court

questioned in its analysis whether that is as clear as it could be. I come at the discussion from the point of view that families must be able to say that they do not want to participate. That is an important point about consent. If that is not clear—I take from clause 95 that the Supreme Court does not believe it to be clear—that has to be addressed.

Tavish Scott: Finally, when those three aspects and others that you may choose to bring before Parliament at a later stage become law, I am sure that you will recognise that for a pupil-support teacher in any of our secondary schools, its being in law will be a different thing altogether from the voluntary structure that used to be the case in the Highland Council area, which you rightly said was effective. I have had discussions about that as well and understand it, but I also know about it because I have a son at a school in the Highlands.

A pupil-support teacher's situation will be manifestly different because they will be sitting with a statute on their desk that they must implement. We are now going to have to go through a lot of codification because of the Supreme Court judgment. I take your point about the cottage industry of bureaucracy, but it is different when the cottage industry is driven by law, instead of people being able to say that they will not do it because they have arrangements that work perfectly well under a voluntary structure. Is that the bind that we are now all in?

John Swinney: I do not think that that is the case at all. The opportunity that is available to us through our response to the Supreme Court judgment is that we can address the issue of clarity so that we have in place a framework that is easier to understand and more comprehensible for everybody—teacher or health visitor—who has to operate the system. Parents will have clarity about their rights and the wider framework within which the process operates.

Tavish Scott: I take that point, but it therefore logically follows that—with regard to Liz Smith's earlier questions—the definition of wellbeing and all related factors are going to have to be crystal clear. Are we—I know that you will say that this could or could not happen—therefore going to have another court question about clarity? That is the bit that many see as being the most uncertain.

John Swinney: I do not agree with your last point. I think that the definition of wellbeing is clear, but I accept that it is not in law—that is the difference. Colleagues might not think that it is possible to define wellbeing, but I think that it is perfectly possible to define it. We define many things in life, and I believe that the wellbeing of our young people and children is perfectly definable. However, I accept that it is not in law, which is the hard point that the Supreme Court put to us.

In relation to the questions that Liz Smith asked earlier, wellbeing is different from welfare. We know what welfare looks like. The Supreme Court has done an excellent job in setting out what welfare is and what is triggered by it, and it is defined. However, to be consistent about this, the Supreme Court is able to do that because welfare is defined in law, and that is the point that I accept is not addressed by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, but must be addressed to satisfy the Supreme Court.

09:45

Ross Thomson (North East Scotland) (Con): For the sake of absolute clarity, is the scheme that was introduced in the Highland Council area in 2008 exactly the same as the scheme that would have been introduced on 31 August this year?

John Swinney: No, because the particular legal framework that accompanies the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 was not in force in 2008.

Ross Thomson: In that case, why has the Scottish Government kept using Highland Council as the example for all local authorities across Scotland to follow?

John Swinney: For a number of very good reasons, not least of which is the fact that the application of the scheme in Highland reduced the number of referrals to the children's reporter in the area from 2,335 in 2007 to 744 in 2013, which is a drop of 68 per cent, and there has been a sustained reduction of 15 to 20 per cent in the number of looked-after children. I think that those results are because Highland has been taking an early-intervention approach on these questions.

As is often the case in Scotland, good ideas that happen in one part of the country do not always happen in all parts of the country and do not always get implemented on a systemic basis. However, improvements of that magnitude in the support and nurture of children are benefits that I think need to be shared across the whole country.

Ross Thomson: Following on from Liz Smith's line of questioning about whether local authorities have been acting lawfully following the judgment of the Supreme Court, I see that a number of local authorities are proceeding with the policy and others have taken the guidance off their websites. There seems to be a bit of confusion on the part of local authorities. Can you give a guarantee again that they are acting lawfully? What steps are you going to take to provide clarity to local authorities?

John Swinney: Even though it has been alleged for a number of years, I do not run every local authority in the country—[*Interruption.*] Tavish Scott is not allowed to make sedentary

interventions at this point. We provide guidance, and we have done so in this instance, but each local authority is a self-governing body that must make its own decisions.

Ross Thomson: Will you invite professionals such as Maggie Mellon, the Scottish Parent Teacher Council and even people from the no to named person campaign to be part of the forthcoming engagement process? Will you attend any sessions with parents and practitioners to hear their concerns?

John Swinney: Yes, I will attend events personally, as will the Minister for Childcare and Early Years. On Saturday, I will meet the national parent forum of Scotland. I am not quite sure what its members want to discuss with me, but I will be happy to discuss this and any other issue with them as part of my on-going engagement with that body. I will be active in this discussion and I will be listening carefully. I will do that personally and I will absorb the points that are made to me.

On the point about other organisations, I will engage as widely as I can. I am not making a disrespectful point here, but the fact is that the no to named person campaign does not want to have a named person policy, so there is a bit of a fundamental policy disagreement there. I am happy to engage with people who will accept the principled arguments that I set out to Parliament last week about why we have gone down this route, and I am happy to engage with people who will respect the democratic will of Parliament—we should not forget that Parliament has legislated for this.

I hope that you will forgive me if I do not engage in conversations about consultation with people who want to ensure that we do not have a named person policy. We have a fundamental disagreement. Part of the challenge for those who took the legal challenge to the Supreme Court was to bring the policy to an end, and they failed to do that. The Supreme Court did not support them in that. I have the weight of the Supreme Court on my side on that question, as well as the weight of Parliament.

What I do not demur from in any way is the need to adequately, properly and fully address the issues that were raised in the Supreme Court judgment, and I am happy to engage widely on those questions, but I hope that you will understand that I do not see the value in discussing the question in principle, because I have made it clear to Parliament—and I have parliamentary authority to support me—that this policy will be implemented.

Ross Thomson: Thank you, cabinet secretary. I appreciate your response, although I give a gentle reminder that the no to named person

campaign represents the weight of parental opinion as well. For clarification, will there be a consultation paper at the end of the three months?

John Swinney: I will give consideration to what follows the consultation period. There will obviously be proposals that will have to be set out for Parliament and I do not yet know what form they will take, so I will reserve my position on that.

Johann Lamont (Glasgow) (Lab): I am interested in your position and in your comment that you will not have a discussion on the question in principle. I recognise that you can promote that principle, but I say to you in all seriousness that there are people who are concerned about the named person and who have their children's interests at heart. They may not be actively involved with the organisation, but they are genuinely concerned and need to be persuaded. With respect, I am not sure that they will be persuaded by an argument that says, "Well, we've decided this and we can't be shifted on it." I know people who have fought every day for their children—including children with disabilities—who are genuinely concerned by the policy. I am not sure that closing the door to conversation with those people will help a policy that, in principle, I probably support in large part.

The question that I am interested in—and I worked in this field before—

John Swinney: Could I—

Johann Lamont: Could I make my point first? That was the kind of work I did when, as some might say, I still worked for a living. I therefore absolutely understand the need to recognise early signs of problems and to intervene early, but I am being told by people who work in schools, in third-sector organisations in our communities and in social work that the supports are not there in the way that they were in the past.

To what extent have you assessed whether the named person will, in reality, be able to access supports? Classroom assistants are not there in the same numbers. Attendance officers, home links teachers, behaviour support, education support and other supports in communities for children's organisations to work with families are all reducing, because of financial pressures. We could end up having an academic argument about how to ensure that children are identified in order to access supports that might not be there.

John Swinney: First of all, I want to address the early part of your question. I have looked carefully at the issue, and I have to be mindful of what the Supreme Court judgment said. It tested the entire legal framework and judged that there were a certain number of issues that we had to address, and the Government will do so. If the Supreme Court had said that the policy

contradicted basic rights, we would be in a very different situation today, but it did not say that.

Having had that tested in the last court in which it could be tested in the United Kingdom, we have the ability to take forward the legislation, and that is what Parliament has decided. Parliament has legislated for it, I support it and I have no reason to believe that there is not a parliamentary majority to support the legislation today. Regardless of that, the legislation has been passed by Parliament and I have a specific challenge to address the issues identified by the Supreme Court. I was not taking an arbitrary stance in my comments to Ross Thomson; I was simply making the point that if there are people in a campaigning organisation who are implacably opposed to named person, I am not sure that I see the value of a conversation between me and them.

However, the people about whom you are talking are the same as those about whom Daniel Johnson was talking: parents who look at the policy and think, "Wait a minute. What does this represent? I am not certain about this." I have to win the argument with those individuals and persuade them, but I cannot do that by saying that I am not sure whether we will have a named person scheme.

For many of the same reasons as you have, although we had different personal experiences in our working lives before we came to the Parliament, and from the body of my constituency experience as a member of Parliament over the past 19 years, I believe in my heart that such a policy intervention is the right thing to introduce and will help to improve the wellbeing and opportunities of young people in our society. I have to make that case persuasively and I accept that responsibility, as I did in my answer to Daniel Johnson.

The second part of your question is material. If we say to young people and their families in Scotland that if they have difficulties the named person will be a point of contact to enable them to access resources to support them, we have to be able to deliver on that. We have that obligation and that is why, in challenging financial circumstances, we have taken the decision to try to support the provision of wider interventions to close the attainment gap, through the attainment challenge, for example. That dominates a large number of the other responsibilities that I carry as Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

Some of those issues will be challenging for us. In the data that were published last week and discussed at First Minister's question time, we saw the substantial rise in mental health referrals among young people. I accept that the waits for mental health service interventions are too long, but part of that is explained by the fact that we

have had a 30 per cent increase in mental health referrals in one year. The Government has to address that trend properly and fully, to ensure that young people can receive the support to which they are entitled.

You asked a fair question and put a fair challenge to me that it is important that we have in place the support that can address any issues that are raised with us as a consequence of the policy approach.

Johann Lamont: Does that mean that you would consider looking more generally at local government budgets? The issue is not only the increase in mental health referrals, which has been discussed. I contend that early intervention with some of our young people would prevent issues being referred as mental health issues, because they might be about circumstances in the family. The services around a child make a fundamental difference to closing the attainment gap and are also important in the issues that you identify. We need to examine what is happening in our schools and communities. Third-sector organisations have already flagged up to me the resources that are available to them to work in our communities with families that need support. Will you commit to reviewing that? I think that, if you examine the issue honestly and with some rigour, you will find that you need to redirect towards local government resources that have been directed away from it.

John Swinney: I consider all those questions habitually; they are part and parcel of the work that I do. I accept that the fulfilment of the potential of every young person in Scotland is not simply determined by what goes on between 9 o'clock and half past 3 in school; it is about a much wider set of interventions, in which local authorities are significantly involved. I consider those questions on a sustained basis, which is reflected in the Government's policy agenda.

Fulton MacGregor (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP): Cabinet secretary, you have talked a little about the policy roll-out in Highland, as have some of my colleagues. It is very encouraging to hear that that has led to fewer referrals to the reporter and fewer child protection referrals. The point is that it is leading to less state intervention, which addresses one of the criticisms of the policy. If the policy gets parliamentary approval and is rolled out throughout the country, will the results be similar in other authority areas?

10:00

John Swinney: There is an important point in your question, to which I should have referred in my answer to Johann Lamont. It is the fact that earlier intervention has the potential to reduce the

long-term demand on public services. That is what the Highland data suggest. Exercising the named person responsibility and intervening at an earlier stage potentially reduces the case load and the volume of activity that is required in the medium to longer term. A real benefit arises out of that approach, and it is a product of the good example that we have seen in Highland.

Fulton MacGregor: Tavish Scott raised concerns about whether parents and families can opt in and out of the named person scheme. If people can opt in and out, what will the process be for individuals who have opted out when the primary sectors identify a level of risk? Will that just lead to the child protection process being initiated?

John Swinney: To address that point, we will have to consider the questions of consent that the Supreme Court properly put in front of us and, as part of that, codify the approach that we take in relation to individuals' participation in the named person policy. There is a clearly codified approach to child protection, with which you will be conversant from your employment as a social worker before you came into the Parliament. The Supreme Court marshalled that for us in its judgment. If there is an assessment of risk, that is tangibly undertaken within the child protection system and appropriate action can be taken in that context.

I am anxious to make the distinction between child protection interventions, which happen where there is a high level of risk, and the named person policy, which is about early intervention to seek assistance for young people and their families, to try to remedy issues before they become more challenging for the individuals concerned. If we can strike the right balance in that, it will address the point in your earlier question about the opportunity to reduce the long-term demand on public services by intervening before problems become acute.

Fulton MacGregor: Thank you for bringing up my previous employment. My experience, which includes a number of years of working in child protection, indicates that the policy will be of great benefit if it is approved by the Parliament. In picking up on Tavish Scott's point, I probably did not phrase my question correctly; I was raising a concern about what would happen if that part of the legislation was not implemented, rather than making an outright criticism.

Gillian Martin (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP): I am interested in the work that is being done around engagement with public petitioners and those who have concerns. You have alluded to the concerns that parents have. There might have been some misleading information from tabloid

journalism, which is obviously an issue that we will have to deal with.

One of the things that I hear most when we are talking about child protection is that there is a lack of advocacy for children, but no one has asked about that. There are children out there right now who have a named person and who rely on that person, whether they are in the Highlands or in an area where they have someone who is a named person in all but name, such as a guidance teacher. How will you engage with those children and reassure them that the support that they need will be there during the process and their views will be taken into account? That is what has been lacking this morning—a discussion about engaging with the children who are going to be affected by the legislation.

John Swinney: We have a number of different organisations in Scotland that are tremendously well connected with young people. As part of my plan, I want to work with those organisations to try to have some of that dialogue. If the Scottish Government wheels up to have a consultation with young people, it might be more productive if we do that under the auspices of other organisations. I have yet to make specific proposals about that, but I will discuss the matter with some of the very good organisations that foster and encourage dialogue with young people within Scotland, to ensure that we can have the conversation and can understand their perspective fully and properly. That is just as important in the exercise as it is to have the proper and effective engagement with parents and other stakeholders.

Gillian Martin: I go back to my earlier point about the tabloid journalism on the subject, which has certainly been very damaging. I have to declare a certain amount of interest: my husband is a guidance teacher and he tells me that he is effectively acting as a named person. The tabloids have used terms such as "state snooper", which can be offensive to people who are doing very hard work. What message do you have for people such as my husband and other guidance teachers, who are acting as named persons and who are being subjected to that kind of language?

John Swinney: I made clear in Parliament last week my views on the debilitating effect of such commentary on the individuals on whom we rely every single day of the week to provide nurture and support to our children and young people in Scotland. I very much value the contribution of those individuals. I appreciate that it has not been a pleasant experience for them to see their work labelled in that fashion, and I commit myself—as I said in response to Daniel Johnson—to trying to change some of those attitudes and perspectives as a consequence of the leadership that I give in communicating what I think is an extremely

valuable and important policy for supporting the wellbeing of young people in Scotland.

Gillian Martin: I have a final question, to which you may not yet have an answer. One of the things that I discovered when speaking to people about the issue was that they were supportive of the policy in principle but had some niggling concerns about the kind of things that Tavish Scott and Fulton MacGregor mentioned, such as whether people can opt in and out of the named person scheme. I agree with Fulton MacGregor that that is not an ideal situation at all, but a child might want to change their named person if they had an issue with them or were not comfortable with them for whatever reason. Could that be looked at?

John Swinney: That is possible within the existing scheme that was legislated for. I answered a question from Mr Scott—it might have been an intervention—on one of the earlier occasions when the issue was discussed in Parliament, to clarify that that is the case. If families wish to have a different named person for some reason, that can be done as part of the existing framework.

Gillian Martin: Thank you.

Richard Lochhead: I want to ask about the plans for communicating with parents. As a constituency MSP, I have been contacted over the past year or two by several people who have genuine concerns, and by others who couched their comments in wider concerns about the SNP Government on a range of issues. I am aware that there is some hysteria and misinformation out there. How does the Government plan to communicate with parents in a clear, articulate, simple way, so that people can understand what the truth is?

John Swinney: As a long-serving and experienced former cabinet secretary, Mr Lochhead will understand that that obligation rests pretty firmly on my shoulders. I have accepted throughout the whole process that we have a significant challenge to build public confidence in the policy. I intend to do that, because I think that it is the right policy, but we need to explain the arguments for the named person, the resource that it will represent to families and young people in Scotland and the advantages that it conveys for those individuals. We are obviously communicating that in an atmosphere in which many other, much more negative messages are being communicated, and that is a challenge for the Government, but I can assure you that that will be done energetically and emphatically by ministers.

The Convener: I thank the cabinet secretary and his officials for a very useful session this morning.

10:10

Meeting suspended.

10:13

On resuming—

Attainment

The Convener: The next item of business is evidence from a panel on attainment. It is the third of six overview panels, following on from the two panels on skills and post-16 education last week. The evidence-taking sessions will inform consideration of our future work programme and the overview will end with evidence from the cabinet secretary.

Before I welcome the witnesses, I put on record my thanks to all the people who organised and took part in the meeting that we held in Stirling on 30 August on early years and school education. The committee spoke to a number of people with a breadth of experiences, including children and young people, parents, teachers, support staff and people who work in community initiatives. Meeting those people provided valuable insight and context for this overview session.

I welcome Lindsay Law, vice-convener of the Scottish Parent Teacher Council; Graeme Logan, strategic director of Education Scotland; Jamie Petrie, headteacher at Broomhouse primary school; and Paul Clancy, head of secondary education at Dundee City Council, which is one of the nine challenge authorities.

We will go straight to questions. Do the witnesses have any comments on how the governance review that was outlined yesterday will impact on attainment?

10:15

Lindsay Law (Scottish Parent Teacher Council): I read the cabinet secretary's speech. At the SPTC, we welcome the statement that no child will be forced to fail at 11 and that we will not move to selection and to grammar schools. We think that that is the right choice. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development report shows that Scotland has an inclusive comprehensive education system and that it is right to continue with it. We know that the data shows that there is an attainment gap, but we do not often take the time to express what that means or to think about what that means from a parent's perspective.

To put it another way, if you live in Scotland and you are poor, your children are likely to do worse at school than children from richer families. If you are poor, your daughter is likely to perform more poorly in maths and your son is likely to perform more poorly in literacy and reading. You can send your child to the same school as a child from a richer family, but your child is likely to do worse

than the richer child. The cabinet secretary said that poverty is not destiny and we agree with that statement but, sadly, for too many children in Scotland, poverty is shaping their destiny. It is wrong and it is a waste of potential if child after child is rooted in inequality in our society.

Parents naturally turn to schools for answers, but it is clear that the quality of teaching in schools is not the underlying issue when there are children not performing as well as others in the same class, and boys not attaining the same reading levels as girls in the same class. That is one of the reasons why we are resistant to gathering national attainment data either for publication in league tables or to enable such tables to be created. They are a very blunt instrument that do not allow parents to truly see the work that is being done in schools.

Graeme Logan (Education Scotland): Good morning, colleagues. The governance review is a great opportunity for us all to engage in a constructive debate about the best way to support education in Scotland. If we think about the vision of excellence and equity, and about making the breakthrough that we want to make to end the cycle of poverty impacting on attainment, we can think about the best supports and surrounds around schools. The review is an opportunity for schools, teachers and all our partners to think afresh about the best support—especially for the engagement between teacher and pupil—to drive improvement and to make the breakthrough. The review is a great opportunity and I hope that we will have a lively debate about the way forward in supporting improvement in Scotland.

Jamie Petrie (Broomhouse Primary School): From the perspective of a headteacher of a school in Edinburgh, the statement about schools having more power to make decisions about their requirements is very welcome. In schools, we spend all our time thinking about how to include children, how to raise their attainment and how to get them to positive destinations. That is our core business—it is what we do. It is very encouraging to hear that we will be part of the wider debate on how to make that happen in schools and I welcome that.

An important part of that is that poverty should not define a child. There are a number of people in poverty who show a lot of aptitude and skills in my school and I am interested in how we can get them to a positive destination by working together in clusters.

Paul Clancy (Dundee City Council): I agree that a review of the governance arrangements for education in Scotland is timely. We are a small country but, with the number of parties involved at national level and at local level, we have quite a complicated system.

I particularly welcome the idea of trying to increase parental work in schools and parental governance arrangements for schools. We have worked hard over the years to involve parents and they are involved to a certain extent—maybe more in some schools than others. The idea of bringing more parents into the centre of school life will be important.

I also want to comment on leadership, as I do not think that it is just about the autonomy of schools. Schools have quite a degree of autonomy already through curriculum for excellence and devolved school management. What is important is ensuring that the leadership is there to take things forward.

We need to look at the bureaucracy to ensure that teachers and schools are concentrating on the things that matter, and we need to ensure that we have a leadership system that builds practitioners and headteachers so that they are able to lead. We require not only systemic change but cultural change so that communities, parents and headteachers together empower young people in systems. It is not just a matter of systemic change; it has to be something to do with the culture. We have things in our systems that allow such autonomy, but it is not always taken. There are examples of that having happened in Scotland, and that needs to be more widespread.

The Convener: Thank you very much for that.

Daniel Johnson: Thank you very much for coming along and providing us with your views.

The challenge around attainment and equality and equity issues for all children goes to the very heart of why many of us are here. The point about a person's background not determining their destiny is fundamental.

There are three elements: recognising the issue; understanding it and having the right measures in place; and ensuring that we have the right resources in place to tackle it. I am sure that other members of the committee will talk about the measures; I would like to talk about the resources. A broad range of approaches and a child-centred focus are needed to tackle the issues. It is critical that it is not just down to teachers; the broad range of staff in schools, including support staff, are vital. Could I get initial reflections on that point from the panel?

Graeme Logan: From our evidence and from working with schools and local authorities, I absolutely agree that this requires all partners around children and families to work together. In fact, some of the really innovative practices that we see through the Scottish attainment challenge involve teachers working alongside speech and language therapists in the early years, family support workers, our partners in community

learning and development, and the third sector, for example. The best plans have emerged from individual schools and local authorities taking a joined-up approach across the services for children.

I will give one example. We know that children who go into primary 1 aged five have differences in respect of the words that they know. There is an average of a 15-month difference between the vocabularies of the most and least deprived children in Scotland. Through the Scottish attainment challenge, schools are radically looking at the curriculums in primary 1 and primary 2 and changing them to be much more literacy rich in order to close the vocabulary gap as early as possible so that it does not continue to widen. As I said, we also see speech and language therapists working in classrooms with primary 1 teachers.

I absolutely agree that we need all partners to work together. We are seeing that happening in localities across Scotland.

Those are some of the early insights from the attainment challenge.

Jamie Petrie: To pass on from Graeme Logan's point, it is very interesting for us in schools that the early level of the curriculum for excellence starts in the pre-school nursery year, which is not a compulsory part of the education system. We spend a lot of time in schools ensuring that our parents understand that they need to get their children to all their nursery sessions, as they are already starting the curriculum for excellence process in pre-school. We are asked to determine whether the child has achieved the level at the end of primary 1. It is sometimes a challenge for our parents to get their children into nursery every day for every session, but we generally find that the children who come in for every session have far more opportunities to succeed as they go through the school. If they miss a good part of nursery education, they miss a lot of what they need to be able to do when they move into primary 1, so they already slightly fall behind in primary 1.

We have intervention programmes. Schools always look to many different partners. In my school, we have a partnership with the health service in the word boost programme, which is precisely to address what Graeme Logan talked about. The situation of a lot of our children who come through from poverty is well known. Graeme Logan put it in terms of a 15-month difference, but I quite like the analysis that they have heard 2 million words fewer than children who have been read to from birth onwards. That is already a massive gap, which we try to fill in schools by putting in place many programmes to do that.

In order for those programmes to work, we have to upskill the teachers, of course. It is in the nature

of teaching that we ask our staff to be skilled in lots of different areas, but I sometimes have a concern that we are also asking them to be skilled in this area. The question is how we can get a system in initial teacher education whereby teachers who come into the profession can see how those skills are transferable to other curricular areas and other parts of education as well.

Paul Clancy: It is a really good question. The need to get the resource right is a fundamental point for us. The attainment challenge has provided an opportunity to bring in a bank of resources immediately to respond to these problems. What has been interesting for me as I have looked at that is the balance between what we require on the teaching side and what we require on the support staff side. I was interested in some of the evidence from Raploch. Those who provided it talked about the extension of the teacher's role into the social sphere, and I understand what they mean. They were talking about moving away from just traditional teaching and picking up other aspects of nurture and care. I suppose the question that we have asked in Dundee is whether it always has to be teachers who do that. We need to get the right balance between teaching staff and support staff.

Our predominant aim is to ensure that teachers are well trained so that they can concentrate on the role of teaching. They certainly have to nurture and show care, but let us concentrate on the pedagogy and the teaching and work co-operatively and in an organised way with extended ranges of support staff within our core provision to provide those other areas of coverage.

The issue over the years has been that we have brought in support staff and the voluntary or third sector, but it has often just been at the margins. We have not been able to sustain that into the core work because the funding has not been available for that; it has been there only on a temporary basis. If we want to get the right balance and produce good and sound social and emotional wellbeing and health, we need to get the right balance between the skill sets of support staff and those of teaching staff, and then to make sure that the work is funded as part of the core. Under our attainment challenge bid, which was successful, we have mostly strengthened areas on the support staff side, including speech and language therapists and school and family development workers.

I also picked up from the Raploch evidence that families want to have key workers—family workers—who they can rely on. The answer is not just to have more teachers. It is important to have high-quality learning and teaching, but we need to balance that properly with support staff resources that are funded as part of the core organisation.

Lindsay Law: Support services that surround families and go beyond education are vital in helping parents and families to engage with education. The barriers that poverty raises are not always immediately apparent and they do not stop at the school gate. In fact, they start well before school.

It is hard for someone to read to a toddler if their own literacy is challenged. It is hard to provide a child with quiet space to do homework in a home that is cramped, damp and unsafe. It is hard for people to provide food in the school holidays when free school meals are not provided, and school holidays become a challenge to be dreaded rather than an enriching time for children. It is hard for people to provide extra-curricular activities for children if they cannot afford it, and travel times to those activities increase if people do not have a car.

It is outwith the bounds of teachers to solve those things, but they absolutely need to be addressed to allow parents and children to engage with education. If the school asks for money and the parent cannot provide it, that becomes a barrier to a conversation between the parent and the school, because we still have a stigma associated with poverty in this country. That stigma creates a stereotype, which creates anxiety and causes parents and children to disengage from school. The entirety of support surrounding a family is crucial in allowing parents and children to engage with school.

Daniel Johnson: That is interesting. It is great to have such a coherent set of responses.

Paul Clancy made a good point about the need to have the right balance and to have sufficient resources, specifically for additional professionals in schools to support the work that teachers do. I ask Lindsay Law and Jamie Petrie to comment on that as people who are—I hate these clichés—at the coalface, not that children should be going anywhere near coalfaces. Does that support exist? What is the direction of travel? Where would you like to be with non-teaching professional support in schools?

10:30

Jamie Petrie: Such support definitely exists. It is a case of sourcing it, finding it and having access to it.

In my school, we have play therapy, art therapy, parental groups and Barnardo's—we have all the services with which we can possibly engage. The key ethos for schools—certainly, for schools such as mine—is that it is necessary for every person who works with a child in the school, particularly the teachers and the staff who work with them in the classroom, to know everything about that child,

their needs and what will enable them to achieve and attain at school. Once we have that ethos in the school, the professionals can tell fairly quickly whether something is not right in the child's education and whether it is any part of the SHANARRI wheel, such as nurtured or safe. The teachers then have the confidence to act on that and, when they do, they need to know which services are available for them.

I have a concern about having lots of different people in the school. Our pupil support assistants have a significant responsibility to work with children for whom education is challenging and who, as a result, can be violent and difficult to manage. They earn a very small salary for the job that they do and I fear that we are putting a lot of responsibility on to them. However, if we were to put the teacher in that position, it would mean that the pupil support assistant would have to go into the class while the teacher nurtured and supported the child during a crisis.

We have a lot of accessible services around schools. The difficulty is that each school has its own context and what might be seen as a challenge in one school might not be one in another. We have a responsibility to ensure that all children are included and I know from experience that some of the things that children at Broomhouse have done in the past would be catastrophic in a different school not that far away. However, we manage those things because we know our children and the services well.

In a way, there is in school an inequity of expectations about what children come with and I agree with Paul Clancy that, if we are going to be fully inclusive—with which I absolutely agree—we need to have more resources in school. A small percentage of our children tend to take up a significant amount of teacher, management and pupil support assistant time and, if we are to raise attainment for all, I am concerned about the effect that that amount of time being spent on that small percentage who really require it will have on the other 95 per cent who do not require it but who also deserve to receive the service so that they continue to improve their attainment. That is the challenge.

We know how extensive the waiting lists are for mental health services. I do not know whether there is a way of fast-tracking referrals to those services. Children go through crises at different times. Many children suddenly go through a crisis to which we have to react there and then. If we refer them to mental health services or other services because they have just had a serious trauma in their lives, having to wait nine months can be too long for them. During that time, not only do they struggle to engage with mainstream education, which is where we want them to be, we

have the challenge of where they are if we do not have them in mainstream education. Are they in a safe environment if they are out of school and not in mainstream education?

We have a number of services. They are perhaps not as extensive as they were the past, but I guess that it is for us to work out creative ways to use people to the best of their abilities and to use those services to train and upskill the people who work in schools to deliver part of the service.

Lindsay Law: When parents do not engage, it is often because of their experience of the education system and social services. That barrier needs to be broken down because those parents might have a distrustful relationship with authority based on their experiences. It is vital that that barrier be broken down to allow them to see that teachers and authorities have the best intentions for their children and want to work with the parents to enable their children to achieve their potential. All parents really want to have discussions with the school about what their child's potential is, whether the child is achieving it and what they can do to support the child in achieving it.

Many teachers would admit that, in the early days of the curriculum for excellence, when it was a new curriculum that was unfamiliar to parents and when teachers were coming to grips with it, that tracking was a work in progress and was not at the point that it is at today. The impact on parents was that they were not equipped with the correct information to understand where their child was and to fully support them. For parents whose literacy was perhaps more challenged, it was even more challenging to understand a whole new set of what to parents sometimes feels like jargon. It is important to talk to parents in plain English about what standardised assessments mean for their child, what the plan is for their child and how parents can help.

Colin Beattie: We are all agreed that closing the attainment gap is a good thing, but over the several years during which we have been talking about the attainment gap, I have never been as clear as I should be about the targets that we should use and how to measure progress. How do we measure progress on the issue and which targets should we use?

Graeme Logan: In the senior phase, we have clear data through the national qualifications and other awards, so we can see clearly how individual young people are performing and how schools and local authorities are performing in relation to raising standards for all children and closing the gap. At primary school level, we have not had a nationally consistent approach that allows us to look at the attainment gap, and particularly the poverty-related attainment gap. That is why, with

the national improvement framework, there is a commitment to look at the data on children attaining curriculum for excellence levels. We have a clear framework for what children should achieve in literacy and numeracy—the early level by the end of primary 1, the first level by the end of primary 4, the second level by the end of primary 7 and so on.

Colin Beattie: So we are purely focused on academic achievement.

Graeme Logan: No. Progress on literacy and numeracy using those levels is one part of the story. There are other measures, such as the things that we see through profiles. Under curriculum for excellence, young people have a profile of their achievements beyond literacy and numeracy—for example, how they have contributed to school life through community work and volunteering or work that they have done as responsible citizens in relation to the environment or improving their locality. At the individual child level, there is rich evidence of and data on what the child is achieving in the round. Nationally, we are trying to be clearer on progress on literacy and numeracy through the curriculum for excellence levels.

When the OECD was with us last year, it was clear that one of the strengths is children's confidence, their engagement and their wider achievements. Through curriculum for excellence, there is a broader and richer experience than before. The challenge for us now is to make that consistently strong across Scotland.

Colin Beattie: We can measure academic achievement by the number of certificates, but a lot of what you are talking about is much more subjective. How do we get a consistent target and consistent data coming back if a lot of it is subjective?

Graeme Logan: We have to identify what data we want to look at. As I said, the national improvement framework is focusing on literacy and numeracy, but we should remember that the curriculum for excellence literacy and numeracy levels are very broad. It is not just about basic reading and writing but about looking at literacy across the curriculum, beyond school and so on. The levels are broad and they include a lot of skills and achievements. I suppose that the question is how much of the data we want to collect nationally and why. We do not want to cause perverse incentives and narrow the curriculum. We want to be assured that individual children are getting a broad and rich experience and that that is recognised.

We have seen some really simple ideas in the attainment challenge. For example, schools in areas of poverty have thought of the 50 things that

they want every child to experience by the time they leave primary school. Those can be things that other children take for granted, such as going to museums.

We have to be clear. We have the data for the senior phase, which is not just academic, as it includes vocational qualifications and wider awards, and we are now looking at progress through the curriculum for excellence levels in primary school.

Colin Beattie: Are we satisfied that we have consistent measures in place?

Graeme Logan: We have them at the senior phase. We have qualifications, achievement awards and vocational qualification evidence. We are working on looking at developing that in the primary sector as well, which is why the national improvement framework was introduced. For example, data on the broad curriculum levels in literacy and numeracy that I mentioned will be collected this year for the first time. The data can be looked at in terms of Scottish index of multiple deprivation bandings, so we can look at the difference in attainment of children from different socioeconomic backgrounds. We will be able to see, on that particular indicator, how well children are progressing on literacy and numeracy.

It is important that we look at this in the round and in the context of each school and that we support schools to tell their own story of how they are helping children to overcome the impact that poverty has on attainment and achievement.

Jamie Petrie: As headteacher of a school, I ask the teachers throughout the years, "Are these children making progress? If they are, how are they making progress and what is your evidence?" Education Scotland has given a lot of guidance and moderation on that, and on significant aspects of children's learning that we work on.

Within a primary school, a big part of the ethos is about achievement rather than attainment, although attainment is a significant part of that. Children can feel a sense of achievement if they attend a judo club, win a fencing medal or are part of debating team—whatever it may be—and they are made to feel that that is a valuable experience for them. In schools, we learn that the more that children feel that they are achieving things, the more likely they are to engage in the other aspects that lead to attainment in national examinations later on.

Under Education Scotland's guidance, we have a very clear system with which to prepare our children for skills for life and skills for work. We recognise that not all children will go to university. We need to find out what children's skills are and then find the right places where those children can develop those skills, so that they can go to a

positive destination. We start that very early on, in nursery and primary school, and we have good dialogue with secondary schools to pass on that information, so that when children go to secondary school they do not feel that they are out of their depth—when they feel out of their depth, their esteem goes right down and their learning suffers as a result.

We have attainment measures that we must follow. My attainment measure is to ask a teacher, “In the time that you have had this child in your class, from start of the school session up until the end, have they made progress and what kind of progress have they made?”

We should not put children in boxes. I worry that if we test those children who come into schools with far less literacy and numeracy too much, we automatically put them in a box marked “failure” from day one. That is not the right thing to do for a four or five-year-old; it does not help their self-esteem or their journey through school. There needs to be an understanding that, as professionals, the majority of teachers—if not all of them—go into their school every day and do their absolute best to help children, raise their attainment and give them a positive destination. That is what they do, and we need to recognise that. We need to have confidence and faith in our teachers.

Gillian Martin mentioned that her husband is a guidance teacher and that he has felt that he has had a hard time from the tabloid press. In schools, we are being told all the time that we must raise attainment. There needs to be a recognition that every school and teacher in Scotland has that purpose, because perhaps the perception in society is that we do not have that purpose. We do—we absolutely do. Schools and parents would very much welcome that recognition, and it would give our teachers far more confidence. I will use Daniel Johnson’s phrase, although he did not like it: teachers are the people at the coalface, and they are delivering on that purpose every day, with passion, enthusiasm, drive and commitment.

A number of things are in place and we know where our children are; the question is how we benchmark that against others. We cannot do that, because we are told that schools are individual places and a given school could have a selection of pupils who are very different from the pupils at a school that is 300 yards away. However, that school will be doing its absolute best for its children.

John Swinney made a vital point in his paper about cluster working. There are four schools in my cluster. They are very different, but we purposefully learn from one another. Our teachers work with and moderate one another, so we are reaching common standards on what the

curriculum should be and are able to go back to schools and say that we are on the right track with something, for example, or that we need to develop it further over the coming years.

On attainment, the best way of deciding where a child is in their journey through education is for the teachers to know the children inside out and to pass on that information through the profiles that Graeme Logan mentioned.

10:45

The Convener: Before I let Mr Clancy in, Tavish Scott wants to ask a supplementary question.

Tavish Scott: It is on the same theme as Colin Beattie’s questions. Mr Petrie, I get what you said, particularly as a parent of a primary school child. However, I cannot get how your point, which was a fair one, that we cannot benchmark one primary school against another is consistent with national Government’s desire to have tests—it has been calling them tests—right through primary level and to be able to do comparisons, which is what Mr Swinney has said in Parliament a number of times.

Jamie Petrie: I have not been party to discussions on what the tests are, so I cannot comment on them. A lot of the standardised testing that is currently used in schools was created before curriculum for excellence came out. Therefore, the standardised testing that we ask children to do is not necessarily fully reflective of the curriculum that we are delivering now. Assuming that the national tests will be entirely based on the curriculum for excellence experiences and outcomes, as teachers, we will be tasked not only with delivering the experiences and outcomes in our own creative way, but with tracking whether the children have achieved them at the end of the early level, the first level or the second level. I hope that the national tests will be more of a reflection of the reality of curriculum for excellence than the standardised testing has been.

Tavish Scott: Your point is that standardised tests have to include teacher judgment, and that judgment will be individual to that class. Looking at the issue at the parliamentary level, how can we see a comparison from one school to the next? Teacher judgment does not allow that to happen, does it?

Jamie Petrie: Teacher judgment is based on what the teachers are delivering to the children, which is consistent throughout the country. The experiences and outcomes are the same in Inverness, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Tavish Scott: I could pick an argument with you about that, but go on.

Jamie Petrie: It is about trusting that teachers are following the experiences and outcomes. That takes us back to Paul Clancy's point about leadership in schools and the robust systems that each school has in place to ensure the quality of the education that takes place there. Furthermore, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education assesses and checks the school's position in delivering the curriculum, and it will either verify that that is happening or offer support.

Tavish Scott: At what point after the national framework is in place will we see statistics that will allow us to compare schools' performance? We keep being told that we will be able to see that.

Jamie Petrie: As a headteacher, I am not hugely qualified to express an opinion on that debate.

Tavish Scott: You are very qualified; you are the most qualified person here.

Jamie Petrie: If you are asking me whether I want my school to be compared with another school, my answer is yes, that is what I want. I am interested in local schools' attainment results because we have that conversation as a cluster. If a school had a real strength in an area, we would not be using our professional skills particularly well if we did not then go in and ask what it had been doing that allowed that to happen. As headteachers, we have the autonomy to be able to do that; we can take the best ideas from other schools.

Using testing as a tool for parents to decide where to send their children would be a whole different matter. Again, to go back to Lindsay Law's point, it is very much my job as a headteacher to manage and support our parents so that they know exactly what the curriculum, inclusion and GIRFEC are. That is our role, along with partner agencies such as Education Scotland, which puts out a huge amount of information. However, that takes us back to the issue of inequality and people's ability to access the information being dependent on their level of literacy.

We need to get parents into school more and talk to them in their language. I cannot remember which member asked Mr Swinney to ensure that parents got information in a language that was for parents, but that is up to us; it is our role to do that. If we do not do that and do not share information correctly with parents, they will never understand.

That takes us back to leadership in schools. Most schools that I work with have parents in an awful lot more these days. Certainly, when I was at school, my parents were never in school other than to attend a parents' evening. Now, it is commonplace in most schools to have parents in

quite regularly. That is good, because it builds their understanding of what the curriculum is, what inclusion means and where their child is.

Paul Clancy: Mr Beattie's original question was to do with the measures that might be used to determine whether the attainment gap has been closed. Some long-term and medium-term measures will be needed, as well as things that are done on a term-by-term basis. I think that the senior phase results—in other words, the traditional examination results—along with the positive destination measures, are important in showing that a long-term change has been made and that the attainment gap has been closed. Although those are long-term measures, they remain important and we will be looking to them.

For me, another important set of measures relates to what happens when a child starts their education. We know that, if a child is not school ready, it is extremely difficult to get them to catch up to other young people who are. We know where they need to be, what level their language development and their co-ordination need to be at and what experiences they need to have had. The issue is not just measuring that; it is ensuring that children have those experiences—that is the trick. Many of our young people have not had those experiences, and it is an uphill battle to bring them up to the level that other young people are at.

Health visitors have very clear measures for children at certain parts of their life journey. There might need to be a measure for the point at which a child starts their education that enables us to say, "We feel that this child is ready." It is not that something is missing, but that aspect needs to be fully defined.

Graeme Logan is right. Literacy and numeracy need to be measured on an on-going basis. For me, that is at the core of determining a young person's progress throughout their primary career. I think that parents have an absolute right to be able to find out, in a standardised way and based on a nationally operated scheme, where their child is as regards literacy and numeracy. I do not think that it is too much to ask that we are able to say where a child is on their numeracy journey and what that means in relation to the picture across Scotland. We should be able to establish that in very clear language. I think that we have gone a long way in defining that, but I accept that there is a way to go. Thousands of teachers will be using a mixture of standardised assessments and their own judgment, so there is a bit of work to be done to get a common language. We have been through that process before with the five to 14 curriculum, and we have some way to travel to get to that point. Parents have an absolute entitlement to be told where their child is on the numeracy journey. Mapping pupils' literacy and numeracy—I

think that Graeme Logan spoke about young people's achievement journey as they go through school—helps us to keep an eye on the attainment gap. Where that is tight and there are not too many big gaps, we find that, by the time pupils get into the senior phase, they are ready for the examinations.

We do not want to have too many measures. It is a case of using the right measures at the right times. For me, we need to measure where children are at the start of the school journey, their literacy and numeracy throughout the school journey, and their examination results and the extent to which they reach positive destinations at the end. Those are the key long-term measures that will enable us to guarantee that we are talking in a consistent language. However, some work is required on that.

The Convener: Gillian Martin wants to ask a short supplementary.

Gillian Martin: It is based on what Jamie Petrie said about measurement. Is it incumbent on us as parliamentarians not to be so obsessive about the statistics and to look at the whole achievement and attainment picture? Is there anything that we can do to help reflect what is happening in schools without boiling everything down to numbers that we beat one another around the head with?

Jamie Petrie: That would be lovely. In praise of the inspection process, I must say that it looks at achievements in school, the school ethos and everything that a school is; it does not focus only on attainment. Of course attainment is looked at, because we are accountable for our children and we have to make sure that they are making progress. I hope that Graeme Logan will agree with me when I say that, in the majority of cases in which a child is not achieving as they should be, the parent will know about that, an intervention programme will be put in place with the parent as a partner, and other agencies will be involved in that process, as required, through the child planning system.

There are two ways of looking at the issue. Somewhere along the line, someone needs to be able to say that education in Scotland is getting better. I have been doing this job for 20 years and, when I look at the teachers who are coming into education now, I see that the skills, knowledge and expertise that they are bringing in are far greater than when I started as a teacher 20 years ago—the use of research, the creativity and the risk taking. Teachers have the opportunity to take the experiences and outcomes and deliver them in the way that they want to with their children. The involvement of the children is a key part of this—it is not about the teacher in the school saying, "This is what we're going to learn"; it is about the children being involved in that process, which

helps with their emotional literacy and everything else that builds a bigger picture. That is all significantly better than I can ever remember it being, which is a real positive for me.

As Graeme Logan says, when you walk into any school and talk to a child now, they will talk back with confidence. That is without even knowing what picture lies behind that child—the trauma that they have gone through, the bereavements, or the awful things that they have seen in their lives. In schools, because we have that caring ethos as well as high aspirations, which is a hugely important thing for us, the bigger picture is that we are doing everything that we can. Teachers are working incredibly hard to do the best for their children.

From my perspective, our attainment may not be as high as somebody might like it to be, or it may not be at the national level—it is not far off, which is quite good for Broomhouse—but we do not need to be slated for it, because we are working absolutely to our maximum to give the best to these children. The Government needs to have confidence that that is what we are doing, which is what the inspection process does and the process supports us if things are not quite right, which is good.

Lindsay Law: I would urge extreme caution in comparing school against school and setting communities against each other and encouraging parents to look at that data and then decide to go through an upheaval in their lives to move schools.

In the cabinet secretary's statement yesterday, he talked about identifying successful schools, but the reality is that schools in deprived areas are doing other things. They are working very hard. Primary school teachers are finding clothes for children or they are finding food for children when they come in in the morning. That is time that is taken away from attainment in literacy and numeracy, so we should be very cautious about using literacy and numeracy attainment to define the success of schools.

I have no doubt that the vast majority of parents and teachers across the country have one thing in mind and that is successful and happy children. It is wrong to assume that a school with low attainment is not a successful, well-led and happy school.

The Convener: Graeme Logan—very briefly, please.

Graeme Logan: I was just going to agree with what Jamie Petrie was saying. The inspection model, which has been redesigned, looks at achievement and attainment and it evaluates the breadth of experience that young people are offered and the quality of their achievement. That

is equally valued along with the other attainment measures.

To go back to Ms Martin's point about not just picking out sets of data, we would agree that we have to judge the system on a balanced range of different measures and indicators; picking out one measure causes perverse incentives and it can be damaging.

We are currently working with parent organisations and others to develop the Parentzone website. It will have a page on each school that will tell the story of that school using a whole range of evidence and information so that people will get a flavour of that school in the round, what it is offering and how well it is doing. As a country, we want to move forward with that approach, in which we do not just pick out individual measures but tell the whole story of the school and look at success in the round.

The Convener: Thank you. I am going to move on to Ross Greer but, before I do, I will just ask that both the questions and the answers be shorter. We have an awful lot to get through in the next hour or so, so let us try to keep things succinct.

Ross Greer (West Scotland) (Green): Thanks, convener. I will give it a go.

In response to Daniel Johnson's questions, Jamie Petrie observed that a small number of pupils take up quite a large amount of resource and time, which is right. Resource deployment is obviously going to have a huge bearing on how we close the attainment gap but, to use another coalface-like buzzword, there is a postcode lottery going on when it comes to identifying young people with those additional support needs in the first place. In Renfrewshire, 15 per cent of young people have been identified as having ASN, but the figure is 35 per cent in neighbouring West Dunbartonshire. I do not think that there is actually a 20-point gap between those two groups of young people. From your experience, is there consistency and are young people with ASN being identified early enough, or are there issues that will prevent us from deploying resources correctly?

11:00

Jamie Petrie: Children's needs are identified from a very young age by the health visitor, or even at birth. When they move into their nursery years, the nursery staff are skilled at identifying whether the children have needs. At all stages, those needs are discussed and strategies are put in place for those children, and that continues throughout their school life. There is consistency within a school in working out where the needs are. At a national level, I do not have the answer

to that. Graeme Logan or Lindsay Law may know more about it.

Lindsay Law: Parents are the foremost experts in their own child, but we often hear from parents that their voices are not listened to when they have asked for a diagnosis, and they struggle to engage with that support. Parents' voices should become louder in the discussion, and the experts should listen to parents when they say that they feel there is a problem with their child. Some parents tell us that, at present, that is not happening universally throughout Scotland.

Graeme Logan: To go back to Ross Greer's question, there is earlier identification, as Jamie Petrie and Paul Clancy have said. Paul mentioned the 23-month health visitor assessment, for example, which shows developmental and early literacy issues. As part of the attainment challenge, we are working on having that information shared with nurseries and early learning providers, and with schools, so that health and education are working together to intervene as early as possible.

Ross Greer is right to note that there are different ways in which additional support for learning is classified in different local authorities, and colleagues in other parts of Government are looking at the issue of consistency where identification is a gateway to other support. However, we are seeing progress through GIRFEC and I agree with Lindsay Law that, in best practice, parents are fully involved in the planning process, their concerns are listened to and professionals work together around the family and the child. The challenge is to make that consistently strong across the country.

Paul Clancy: I agree. In my experience, we identify the young people. Parents play an absolutely critical role, and we need to work better in that respect. For some reason, issues are not always recorded, which is perhaps to do with the way in which the systems are interpreted. The young person may be receiving additional support, but they might not be classified as having additional support needs. There is a lot of variance across Scotland in how that is captured, but that is not to say that those children are not getting support. We need to look at that and try to regularise recording across the country.

Ross Greer: In the spirit of short questions, do you think that designating support for learning posts as promoted posts would be a welcome development in this area, or would that not be necessary?

Paul Clancy: I think that it would help in some respects. We require expertise in support for learning, and it can come from teachers, educational psychologists and allied professionals,

but more and more we are seeing classroom teachers as being able to work with pupils who have a range of needs. A lot of the expertise that is required is at ground level. I cannot make a call in terms of payment, but at present we say that the classroom teacher is every bit as important as anyone else, because they have to work with the young people with needs. That is happening more and more at the coalface, as we have been discussing today.

Jamie Petrie: On that point, we need some recognition of how much time GIRFEC takes from a school's hourage in a day. My school is by no means one of the most deprived in Scotland, and I have 43 children on the GIRFEC cycle. To put that in context—going back to what John Swinney said about unnecessary bureaucracy and teacher workload—when a child is in the child's planning system, that requires involvement from parents and other agencies, and a whole team working around that child. The class teacher has to write a report about the child, attend the child's planning meeting and take the strategies from that meeting and implement them in the classroom. We must recognise that those are the same class teachers who have to plan for curriculum for excellence at the same time.

If you were to ask me for a wish list, I would say that more resources are needed for schools to support the effective implementation of GIRFEC. We do it effectively within the structures that we have in our school, but we must recognise that that takes away our capability for putting more resources into delivering all aspects of curriculum for excellence. We have to take that seriously. I will give you an example. In one of my classes, we have seven children who all have individualised programmes for their daily life in the classroom, each of whom requires the teacher to have something in place for them. However, there are also another 23 children who do not have anything in place for them but who still deserve to have exactly the same amount of the teacher's time put into making creative, progressive, exciting and challenging lessons. That is where the teacher's workload can become an issue.

Liz Smith: Do you believe that the provision of free school meals is the best measure for identifying children who require help?

Graeme Logan: It is a challenge to allocate additional resources. Under the Scottish attainment challenge, Education Scotland is working with local authorities and the Scottish Government to allocate funding to targeted areas where there are high numbers of children living in poverty. We have been using SIMD data and looking at SIMD bands 1 and 2, but that is not a perfect measure—no measure is perfect, because it is difficult to develop simple, clear criteria that

will identify poverty in all parts of the country. For example, Scotland has a lot of rural poverty that postcodes do not help to identify, and free school meal entitlement does not necessarily capture it either.

We need to continue to consider what measures we can use to identify children who are living in poverty, especially as the Scottish Government's delivery plan talks about moving to pupil equity across many parts of Scotland. We need to develop criteria that are simple and clear, which the public, parents and others can understand and which capture poverty as effectively as possible, but it is really difficult to do that. We are looking at what happens in other countries, and our colleagues in the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland have strong views on the matter as well. It is challenging to find a set of criteria that are clear and fair and that will accurately identify poverty.

Liz Smith: What is the timescale for providing a satisfactory set of criteria, given that a lot of public money is about to be invested in the Scottish attainment fund?

Graeme Logan: The move to the pupil equity funding element of the Scottish attainment challenge is scheduled from April next year, and we are working on a framework that will be published in December. Our contribution to that framework will be the educational strategies and so on that will give schools guidance. I understand that the framework will also set out the criteria for the allocation of the funding.

Liz Smith: It has been announced that the money that will be provided for the attainment fund will be raised through council tax. Is it your understanding that that money will be allocated by central Government?

Graeme Logan: The money for the current aspects of the Scottish attainment challenge—the challenge authorities and the schools programme—is allocated by the Scottish Government to local authorities. The schools programme funding goes through local authorities, which submit plans that we scrutinise educationally. We use set criteria to judge the educational merits of those local plans and work with our academic partner at the University of Glasgow and others on that.

I do not know the final mechanism by which the money will be physically transferred from the Government. I am not sure whether that is what you are asking about.

Liz Smith: Do you accept that that will be an important decision? When you come up with acceptable criteria against which to judge whether children need help, not only must those criteria be very clear to everybody in education but there

must be a clear model of funding to allow the allocation to take place. Yesterday, we heard that there can be a regional structure as well as local authorities and central Government and that there are issues about how the money will be allocated. I am interested to know how a headteacher would like that decision to be made.

Jamie Petrie: It is well above my pay grade to make that decision. The headline was that schools would get £100 million. Like any headteacher, if you gave me money directly I would use it effectively. However, there would have to be a system in place to ensure that that would happen consistently throughout the country; otherwise we would run the risk that money could be allocated to schools and not be used effectively. We have to have a justification for how we want to spend the money. The current criteria from Education Scotland make it clear what the expectations are for how funding should be used and make it clear that there needs to be a level at which somebody looks over what we are doing and says, "Yes, that is an acceptable way to use the funding. I can see why you are doing that." That does not devalue my judgment as a headteacher. For me, it is just another quality assurance process that maintains my confidence that we are going along the right lines.

Liz Smith: Do you agree with Mr Logan when he says that the SIMD has not been a particularly satisfactory model? Obviously, research is going on to make the criteria a bit fairer.

The Convener: Did Mr Logan not say that it was not perfect, which is a slightly different statement?

Graeme Logan: Yes, there is no perfect measure around the world for capturing this accurately. The SIMD has worked in terms of looking at the data that we have—and it draws on a range of data—but we are keen to get the best possible approach to identify both urban and rural poverty.

Liz Smith: I want us to be absolutely clear. Am I right that the research that is being undertaken involving international studies is looking at models other than the SIMD?

Graeme Logan: We are keen to look at how this is done in different parts of the world. The Scottish Government's position at the moment is that it uses the SIMD and there has been talk about free school meal entitlement being a criterion. There are a lot of varying views on that and a decision will need to be taken. I am saying that I do not think that there is a perfect model for this anywhere, because how can we genuinely identify poverty in individual households? It is a challenge to do that in a consistent way.

We have to be absolutely assured that the allocation of funding leads to additionality, so that when the money is used in schools and local authorities it provides additional interventions and additional support for children. It will be a challenge for us to ensure that the funding leads to additionality for children and their families.

Liz Smith: So we will find out in December.

Ross Thomson: I have a brief supplementary on Liz Smith's line of questioning. According to the Scottish Parliament information centre briefing paper, Education Scotland has stated that the

"new funding will reach around 95 per cent of schools in Scotland."

Which are the 5 per cent that will not receive it and where are they?

Graeme Logan: I think that the process of making the policy decision on the criteria is still under way. We can model what it would mean if we use free school meal entitlement and what it would mean if we use the SIMD. The modelling shows the percentage of schools that each approach would reach. If we look at the SIMD, what we are talking about with that funding is an amount of cash per child that follows the child. We can work out exactly how many schools and how many children would be involved if the criterion is free school meal entitlement and we can also work out what the figures would be if we use SIMD bands 1 and 2. There are different examples out there.

When the Scottish Government publishes the framework in December it will outline the educational strategies—the focus of the team that I work with is to look at all the evidence on what actually works when it comes to improving literacy and numeracy and health and wellbeing for children who live in poverty—and I understand that it will also outline some wider issues about policy decisions on the allocation of the funds, accountability and so on.

Johann Lamont: I am interested in the whole question of assessment. It seems to me that by testing you simply describe the attainment gap. I think that Mr Clancy said that you have identified the right of the parent to know where their child is and are ensuring that they know that. However, that only describes the situation and the action that you take to close the attainment gap must be something very different from that. I get it that, among schools with the same kinds of profile, one school will attain more than another, so at one level assessment may identify where there is weakness of practice in one school compared with another. However, in the bigger picture, will the focus on individual schools help to close the gap or will it simply confirm that the gap exists? What needs to be done, maybe at local authority level?

11:15

Paul Clancy: The local authority's role is to ensure that the quality is there, that the targets are right, that the schools are being properly supported and that there is leadership in the schools to be able to take them forward. It is the same principle whether it is a local authority area or an extended educational region: it is about sharing good practice and bringing schools together. We therefore need evidence-based research and evidence-based work that is shown to be successful and can be replicated. The role of the authority is to provide leadership in that regard and, crucially, to ensure that there is leadership in schools; it is also to bring schools together to share best practice and ensure that it is disseminated and shared.

I think that the work has to happen on an individual school basis. In fact, I would argue that it needs to happen on an individual pupil basis, looking at what the pupil's needs are and what that pupil's realised potential should be. Comparisons are helpful to an extent, but the real work happens with the individual young person and ensuring that they reach their potential.

Johann Lamont: Surely if the focus is on the individual pupil rather than the school, the emphasis in the Scottish Government's approach on the school and leadership is probably missing quite an important element. If children bring to school with them a range of issues and challenges, the school alone will not be able to address them. Putting a child's needs in the context of all the services that the local authority provides, whether housing, social work or whatever, therefore makes sense.

Paul Clancy: Absolutely but, in my view, schools play a fundamental part in the operation of the authority. I know that some people see a difference between what is called the local authority centre and the schools, but schools are part of the local authority. We have moved a long way towards schools being seen as community assets working in a community with community resources. That is one of the things that GIRFEC has brought about; it has essentially made schools part of the required range of support. Whatever changes might come through the governance review, we have to ensure that schools remain full partners in the GIRFEC, community-centred approach along with the other services.

Schools cannot retreat to just being the educators and deliverers of literacy and numeracy; they must remain on that high ground. They have a co-ordinating role through having lead professionals and named persons, although I know that that role is being debated. However, what is set out in legislation means that schools play an essential role in assuring that those

resources are brought to bear. Schools are with young people five days a week from 9 until half past 3, they co-operate with parents and are pivotal parts of a community asset. Wherever we go with the governance review, schools need to remain firmly embedded within the GIRFEC operation across services.

Johann Lamont: The logic of that position is that regional educational boards would not really address those matters because there is already something there that fits that role.

I have a question for Mr Logan about directing resources. You said that schools need to prove additionality, but you said earlier that there is already a gap for some young people when they arrive at school. Is it therefore not the mainstream, core function of education to address that gap? If that is the core, mainstream function, why do the resources have to prove additionality? If addressing the gap is the core business, should the funding not be directed to schools to allow them to address that problem?

Graeme Logan: Yes, I think that that is absolutely the core business of schools, as Jamie Petrie and others have said, and every teacher I meet is entirely committed to doing that. Of course, all the core funding that goes into schools is identified for that purpose. What I was referring to earlier was the additional money on top of all the core funding that comes through the Scottish attainment challenge to enable us to try out new and innovative ideas to make the breakthrough that we need. All the commitment and all the work that we are doing is helping, but the additional money needs to offer something more in terms of extra support for children and extra—

Johann Lamont: With respect, surely what it is showing is that the core funding is inadequate in those schools.

Graeme Logan: It is about trying out innovative ideas and providing space for us to try different things. The additional money is there to complement and enhance, and to enable us to do extra work with children.

Johann Lamont: But surely you must accept that the core job in some of our schools is more difficult to deliver if some children who arrive at school are 15 months behind their peers who come from a different set of circumstances. The funding should not be challenge funding or additional funding. The innovative stuff works in any walk of life as it is extra money. Is there not a strong argument that, as the gap is so significant when the children arrive at school, the core funding for those schools needs to be higher and that should be factored in at the stage of delivering education budgets?

Graeme Logan: There is a range of things that can be done by schools. Every school deals with children coming in with different needs and our educational focus is on how learning can be enhanced and organised to help children. The example that I gave earlier in relation to your question about the 15-month gap was of schools that are changing the curriculum in primary 1 to offer a more literacy-rich and play-based experience in order to reduce the gap.

The educational focus of our work is the ideas and strategies that make the difference in literacy and numeracy. The funding models are a different issue and probably not one for me to comment on. Our focus is on educational interventions and educational additionality through the networks that we have created as part of the Scottish attainment challenge to bring teachers and headteachers together to look at what works, to work with the University of Glasgow's senior academic adviser and to share practice through the team of attainment advisers that we have established. Those advisers work on the ground with teachers and headteachers to provide a big additional amount of support and a focus on what works and what strategies make the most difference to children living poverty. That is the focus of the work that I am involved in at Education Scotland.

Johann Lamont: Every school deals with the same set of problems and every child brings their own challenges, but the attainment gap tells us that there is a distinct problem in some schools.

Mr Petrie, you have spoken about a number of issues and strategies today but, in your written submission, you talked about the impact of

“significant cuts to the services around schools”.

Would you develop that point? We talk about testing and in-school initiatives, but to what extent are you able to draw on resources beyond school for children with needs that are barriers to their learning?

Jamie Petrie: From my perspective, GIRFEC is a very inclusive model that must be what we are all about in mainstream education and every child should have the opportunity to be in mainstream education. Over the past few years, the allocation of special school places for children has decreased and the criteria to get a child into special school have to be correct. Ultimately, it is a difficult decision for a parent to make and a difficult decision for a school to make.

I question the skills of teachers who come into schools from their initial teacher education and have to work with very challenging children. A number of our teachers have not been trained in the same way that teachers who work in the smaller environment of special schools were trained, yet we have more and more children with

very complex needs. I think that complex needs are now identified in different authorities in different ways—I am not entirely sure—and either there is a budget allocation for a child with complex needs so that a member of staff can be brought in to work with that child, or there is nothing. For me, that whole picture of GIRFEC is of the teacher dealing with this, this, this, this and this, as well as dealing with their core work of delivering the curriculum for excellence. We know that, if children with complex needs are in the right place, they will learn. However, that does not take away from the point that that can be challenging in the classroom setting, and it can be challenging for other children to be in the classroom with a child who might be going through a trauma.

On the resources around schools, I commend the Scottish Government for protecting teacher numbers, but teachers are just a small part. In my school of 9 classes, I have 27 members of staff. It is not just about the teacher—it is about all the other services around schools. Teaching is our core business—we are not psychologists or social workers—so, if we identify children who have needs, we need to get them seen to by professionals. The point that I was making was that there might be less of that than there was in previous times.

The expectation now is that schools can fix lots of things. Schools do a fantastic job, but they cannot necessarily do everything around a picture of a child from birth onwards. We now have nurseries for two-year-olds in Edinburgh, so we are bringing in children at that point and we know that, by the time a child reaches the age of three, a lot of their behaviours and mannerisms are set. School can make a difference over time, but a child who comes in at the age of four or five with a proper literate upbringing is in a far better position. We did not see children until they were that age, but we are now beginning to see two-year-olds from the most vulnerable families, and I think that that is a good thing. However, a lot of the services just do not have the capacity to support schools that they perhaps used to have.

Lindsay Law: The SPTC agrees that resources need to be provided to teachers and schools to improve outcomes for children who are raised in poverty. We would favour an across-school approach that could target free school meals—it is not a perfect indicator—but not every child who is raised in poverty lives in an area that pops up in the SIMD indicator.

If we do not look at the causal links between poverty and attainment, we will not break those links. We are essentially asking teachers and schools to apply a great big sticking plaster over a gaping wound of inequality in our society. They are bringing children up to where they should be

and helping them to improve their attainment, but they are not able to tell parents why the child is not achieving from the moment they step into school. Unless we can answer that question, we cannot tell parents what they need to do and we cannot tell the support agencies that work with families from birth and before birth how they should support a child to get ready for education. Until we do that, we cannot create a sustainable model that will allow the next generation of children who will be born into poorer families to begin to achieve from birth.

Richard Lochhead: I thank the witnesses for their evidence today. It has been amazing.

Lindsay Law's final point and Jamie Petrie's earlier points are linked. Stepping back from the whole debate over attainment, some solutions will come from the schools but a lot will come from outwith schools. Are you confident that we will get the balance right? I know that the debate is still to take place but I see a danger that the debate around attainment will be politicians in the Parliament's chamber arguing over the amount of money that is going into education as opposed to getting to the root of the issues that impact on attainment.

One of the biggest issues that I hear about from teachers is what Jamie Petrie mentioned regarding GIRFEC and the increasing demands in the classroom, but, of course, more resources are needed to address that. Likewise, preventative spend is all about trying to help children and families before classrooms have to deal with some of the fallout caused by society.

Graeme Logan: I am happy to answer that question initially. We are a year into the Scottish attainment challenge and can provide some reassurance about whether we are getting the balance right. Local authorities such as Dundee City Council and the other eight challenge authorities and schools are working directly on preparing local plans to bring in improvements and support for children and their families. There is a heartening amount of involvement of professionals and partners other than teachers. I am talking about third sector organisations such as Barnardo's, which Jamie Petrie mentioned. Many others are working at the local level to provide additional services and support for children and their families. In Dundee, as a result of the attainment challenge, we have family support workers in schools who help families to access services.

Moving into year 2, a big focus is around families and communities. For example, we have just appointed a co-ordinator for family learning. The idea is that we will work with partners in a locality to build a family learning offer. If a family is living in an area of multiple deprivation, it will be

clear what support is available to them and how they should navigate that. All those services will come together. Families and communities are as important as the learning, teaching and leadership elements of the attainment challenge and, with the involvement of partners who work with teachers and other educationalists, we will continue to make sure that the local plans strike the right balance.

11:30

Jamie Petrie: Education has been around for a long time, whereas Governments come and go. Whatever happens, teachers will be fully committed to doing their best for children in every school in Scotland. Have confidence and faith in us; we are doing the best that we can.

We have a very good education system in Scotland. Figures are only figures; come into schools and see what is going on. They are amazing places. Kids are thriving and our poorest kids are getting a lot of support. No matter what the resources are, we will continue to give them the best support that we can.

Paul Clancy: From your work, you will all be familiar with schools and will see the differences. Schools are fundamentally different now from when I was at school or even when my oldest children were at school in terms of the number of professionals who are passing in and out. That backs up what Jamie Petrie said. When I was at school, the occasional drama person came in to do something. The visitors' signing-in books now show the number of paraprofessionals and people from other agencies who are in and out of our schools.

The programme for schools—particularly individual child plans—shows the range of practitioners who are working in schools, from parent helpers, who play an extremely important role, right up to those who are involved in developing Scotland's young workforce, whereby strong partnerships are emerging with employers, who are playing a pivotal part in changing how teachers consider what learning and teaching are about. It is about not just delivering knowledge but preparing young people for the workplace.

The diversity of the partners that we are operating with seems about right. It needs to be measured over time and we have to keep testing the waters, but it is heartening that we have a wide range of partners across the key elements. Young people respond very well to that. They respond well to their teachers, but they also respond well to the educational process that is being delivered in a variety of ways. Young people are spending more time outwith schools, particularly in the senior phase. They are spending time in other schools, in

colleges and with employers. The notion that things happen only in the building and only between teachers and pupils has broken down in the past 20 years and we now have a far better range of experiences for the youngsters in our schools.

Jamie Petrie: The parents who are engaging with us who had a negative experience of schools now have a very positive experience, and that positive experience will rub off on their children. We hope that those in the next generation, when our children have their own children, will have a positive experience of school. That is one of the big barriers that we are breaking down significantly.

Fulton MacGregor: What does the panel think about the new autonomy that schools and headteachers, in particular, will get? We have touched on that a wee bit. Does the panel think that it will be an opportunity for communities to come together around the schools, for parents to be more involved and for individualised outcomes to be delivered for the kids who go to the schools?

Paul Clancy: The best schools today work with parents and communities. That already happens where there is leadership and where such work is part of the vision of the school. Communities gather around the school and work with the parents. If we are to provide further opportunities—whether through changes in legislation or governance reviews—there must be leadership to take the cultural change forward.

Everything that I have read in educational research and learned from papers or initiatives indicates that school leadership working with a community produces the best results and change for young people. That message has been going out at educational leadership conferences, from Education Scotland and from a variety of other researchers for many years. We know what needs to happen; we must ensure that staff and schools have the confidence to do it.

Curriculum for excellence was a big cultural change because it asked schools to take the initiative, think things through and define the curriculum in their own context. The curriculum will have a critical core of numeracy and literacy, and there are outcomes and experiences that hold it together. However, it is for the schools to determine how the curriculum works with their teachers, pupils and parents. That is what HMIE found has happened in the best expressions of curriculum for excellence.

Whether we need to go wherever the governance review is going—I cannot comment on that—to get to that point, the destination has already been agreed. Nobody disagrees about the destination; it is a matter of what needs to be put

in place to take us towards it—that is what the argument might be about.

Fulton MacGregor: Is the policy to give schools more autonomy an indication of the Government's view that schools are delivering well and are, in many cases, best placed to meet the needs of individual children?

I will give a wee example. According to the statistics that were released recently, an area in my constituency is in the top 10 most deprived areas. The high school in that area is conducting an innovative programme—a literacy skills festival—that I will attend in the next couple of weeks. There are pockets of such practice everywhere and different examples of it, which I think the Government is promoting in schools throughout the country.

Paul Clancy: I do not disagree with that, and I am certainly not trying to question where the governance review will go. I am conscious that I work in a local authority, and where local authorities sit is obviously part of the discussion.

The point that I am trying to make is that something will not happen because it is legislated for; it will happen because school leaders make it happen. How do we get the best leadership in our schools to make something happen? Everyone, including local authorities, must ensure that the culture exists to allow it to happen and that leadership and schools are supported. There is nothing to prevent any school from being innovative in the way that you have described. Neither legislation nor changes are required to allow that to happen. It can happen. Whether legislation is required is a matter for Government and discussion—I could not comment on that.

Gillian Martin: We have talked quite a lot about parental engagement and some parents feeling that going into primary school is difficult for them. It was very interesting to hear what Paul Clancy had to say about pupils in secondary school working outwith the school.

When we went to Raploch community campus, one of the many conversations that I had was about teenagers not engaging with young children. Maybe there is an opportunity to include parenting skills in personal and social education and to involve teenagers in primary schools so that they come into contact with small children and break that cycle. It is very important to have both boys and girls going back into primary schools and engaging with young children. The young people to whom we spoke found engaging with young children hugely rewarding, and it gave them the skills they will need when they become parents. There is an opportunity to break the current cycle. Can we have your thoughts on that?

Jamie Petrie: We regularly—week in, week out, practically—have young people from our local high school and other schools doing placements in the school. Of the three young people whom we currently have on placement, one is male and two are female. It is about getting them in to work with the children and building their confidence. For me, it is about nurturing the next generation of teachers who are coming through and giving them positive destinations.

A number of schoolchildren, particularly third years, regularly come to our school for a week's placement, and we hold a lot of events. I suppose that that comes down to leadership and the relationship between the cluster and the high school. The high school puts on a number of events that are run by the children there to give them skills. A lot of that activity goes on automatically.

Gillian Martin: I appreciate that you are talking about not only the next generation of teachers but the next generation of parents. It is about breaking the vicious circle that people can get into.

Graeme Logan: Absolutely. Through our inspection programme, we see really strong examples of older children supporting younger children through mentoring, sharing books and literacy work. We constantly want to promote that, as it benefits the younger child and, often, the older child in giving them a range of skills for life and work. We see really strong practice in which older and younger children are paired or work together, either in particular mentoring schemes and projects or in the placements that Jamie Petrie described. That work is absolutely crucial.

Paul Clancy: That point is well made with regard to the diversity of work that is going on. In the past five to 10 years, the staying-on rate in secondary 5 and 6 has exploded. Some of our schools now have a staying-on rate of 87 or 88 per cent in S5. That means that we have a completely different set of young people from those we would have had 15 or 20 years ago, when a range of academic courses such as highers and other qualifications might have seen us through. We need a far greater range of experiences for young people who stay on at school. To be frank, we cannot provide that in school alone, which will not take them to where they need to be in the next few years. There is a lot more work going on in college. We have more than 500 young people working between Dundee and Dundee College for two afternoons a week doing some kind of certificated work.

We have some good examples involving early years childcare, and we have groups of young people who are following a course whereby they are in school for some of the week and in college at other times, moving on to a higher national

certificate programme. That makes an awful lot of sense in terms of their progression and getting them into a sustained positive destination.

We need to break through in what I would call marginal working. We are able to do that for some young people some of the time, but we need to look at how we take that to the point of fulfilling Sir Ian Wood's recommendation about involving greater numbers of young people. That requires far greater co-ordination, finance, thinking, engagement with employers—who have tremendous demands placed on them from a range of other sources—and the involvement of colleges in order to ensure that such working is not provided only at the margins but can be offered to all young people.

I am optimistic about that work. I was not so optimistic about it a few years ago, because it was difficult to break through from that marginal thinking, but we now have far more flexible timetables in our secondary schools and a group of timetablers who want to work creatively. That has certainly helped us. It might also be a generational issue—perhaps younger deputies are coming through who are trying to think about different ways of operating the timetable. The timetable represented a tremendous hurdle to a lot of these initiatives actually happening but, in the past few years, we have been beginning to see real examples of partnership working in a sustained way, and we need to continue that.

The Convener: I will finish with a question that is directed at Graeme Logan, although it addresses a point that Lindsay Law and Johann Lamont made about the circumstances outside school impacting on attainment. Is the attainment Scotland fund about recognising that and trying to put in the extra resources to level the playing field at an early stage?

Graeme Logan: Yes—there is now a £750 million programme over five years to do that and to allow schools and localities to look at what they need to do to make a difference and reduce the impact of poverty on children's attainment. It is a very targeted and focused intervention to do exactly that.

At present, we are working in particular local authorities with large numbers of children who live in SIMD bands 1 and 2 and with schools in the same areas. That is the measure that we are working with. No measure is perfect, but it enables our local partners to focus on and target the children who need the support in order to make a difference and give those children the same chance in life as children have in other areas of Scotland.

The Convener: Thank you for your evidence this morning, which has been very helpful and

interesting. That brings us to the conclusion of the public part of today's meeting.

11:43

Meeting continued in private until 11:59.

This is the final edition of the *Official Report* of this meeting. It is part of the Scottish Parliament *Official Report* archive and has been sent for legal deposit.

Published in Edinburgh by the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body, the Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP

All documents are available on
the Scottish Parliament website at:

www.parliament.scot

Information on non-endorsed print suppliers
is available here:

www.parliament.scot/documents

For information on the Scottish Parliament contact
Public Information on:

Telephone: 0131 348 5000

Textphone: 0800 092 7100

Email: sp.info@parliament.scot



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba