

National Assembly for Wales

**Report by the Local Government and Public Services Committee
On**

Placement of Children (Wales) Regulations 2007
Review of Children's Cases (Wales) Regulations 2007
Children's Homes (Wales) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations
2007
Local Health Boards (Functions) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2007

The Committee considered the above four separate regulations relating to the care of looked-after children at its meeting on 18 January 2007. The regulations were considered as a package of inter-related pieces of legislation.

Members requested clarification on:

- the functions of, and relationship between the Local Safeguarding Children Boards, and the local authority Panels that would be required to be established in the case of an out-of-area placement of a child, i.e. how would the two entities be linked and share information in the interests of the child.

Members also made the following comments on the regulations:

- The requirement for children to have a link worker was important as that person would act as an advocate for the child. It would be preferable for the child or young person to retain the same link worker where possible if they moved from one local authority area to another, particularly if the new placement was not a great distance away from the previous one.
- Stability of school placement should also be a key principle to be taken into account when considering placement of looked after children.
- The Committee welcomed the link to the functions of Local Health Boards, the provision of annual health checks and the swift transfer of records required by the legislation.

In response in Committee the following points were made:

- The Local Safeguarding Boards and local authority Panels had different functions: the former would not normally consider individual children's cases, whereas the latter would. The Panel would have to look at the case of a child moving out of the area and this would include considering any safeguarding issues for that child. Furthermore the duties on the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) would also be amended under the regulations to place on them a duty to monitor arrangements for that child. The IRO would be a member of the Panel convened to consider the placement of a child out of the area in which the child is ordinarily resident.

The Committee recommended approval of the Regulations as drafted.

Gwenda Thomas AM
Temporary Chair