

## Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 28 September 2004

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

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

### Questions to the First Minister

#### Travel-to-School Distances

**Q11 Michael German:** Will the First Minister make a statement on 'travel-to-school' distances? (OAQ37603)

**The First Minister (Rhodri Morgan):** Local education authorities must provide free transport for school-age children who live beyond walking distance from school. The statutory walking distances are defined as two miles for pupils under age eight and three miles for pupils aged eight to 16. Many authorities provide more than this statutory minimum requirement. Some 20 per cent of pupils in Wales receive free transport.

#### The Cost of Sick Leave

**Q12 William Graham:** Will the First Minister make a statement on the cost of sick leave taken by workers in Wales? (OAQ37617)

**The First Minister:** It is estimated that sick leave in Wales costs approximately £500 million a year.

#### The Healthy Living of Children

**Q13 Jeff Cuthbert:** What is the Welsh Assembly Government doing to promote and facilitate the healthy living of children in Wales? (OAQ37619)

**The First Minister:** In response to Health Challenge Wales, a number of initiatives are in place, including the Welsh network of healthy school schemes, fruit tuck shops, free primary school breakfasts, physical education and school sport, Dragon Sport, free swimming, the food and fitness task group and the development of the national service framework for children.

#### The Fallen Stock Scheme

**Q14 Brynle Williams:** Will the First Minister make a statement on the fallen stock scheme in Wales? (OAQ37615)

**The First Minister:** The national fallen stock scheme is expected to start operating shortly. Farmers in Wales, as in the rest of the UK, will be encouraged to join the scheme.

#### Engaging the Electorate in the Democratic Process

**Q15 Janet Ryder:** Will the First Minister make a statement on engaging the electorate in the democratic process? (OAQ37594)

**The First Minister:** The Welsh Assembly Government does not have responsibility for the conduct of any elections. However, it does support the Electoral Commission and the Welsh Local Government Association in their efforts to raise voter awareness.

