



House of Commons

Children, Schools and Families
Committee

The Work of the Committee in 2007–08

Second Report of Session 2008–09

Report, together with formal minutes

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The Children, Schools and Families Committee

The Children, Schools and Families Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Department for Children, Schools and Families and its associated public bodies.

Membership at time Report agreed

Mr Barry Sheerman MP (*Labour, Huddersfield*) (Chairman)
Annette Brooke MP (*Liberal Democrat, Mid Dorset & Poole North*)
Ms Dawn Butler MP (*Labour, Brent South*)
Mr Douglas Carswell MP (*Conservative, Harwich*)
Mr David Chaytor MP (*Labour, Bury North*)
Mr John Heppell MP (*Labour, Nottingham East*)
Mrs Sharon Hodgson MP (*Labour, Gateshead East & Washington West*)
Paul Holmes MP (*Liberal Democrat, Chesterfield*)
Fiona Mactaggart MP (*Labour, Slough*)
Mr Andrew Pelling MP (*Independent, Croydon Central*)
Mr Andy Slaughter MP (*Labour, Ealing, Acton & Shepherd's Bush*)
Mr Graham Stuart MP (*Conservative, Beverley & Holderness*)
Mr Edward Timpson MP (*Conservative, Crewe & Nantwich*)
Lynda Waltho MP (*Labour, Stourbridge*)

Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the Internet via www.parliament.uk

Publications

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at www.parliament.uk/csf/

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Kenneth Fox (Clerk), Sarah Thatcher, (Second Clerk), Emma Wisby (Committee Specialist), Judith Boyce (Committee Specialist), Jenny Nelson (Senior Committee Assistant), Susan Ramsay (Committee Assistant), and John Kittle (Committee Support Assistant).

Contacts

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1 Introduction

1. This Report provides an overview of the Committee's work in the 2007–08 Session. Although it serves as a useful summary for Members and others with an interest in the Committee's work, it has been prepared principally for the Liaison Committee,¹ which customarily publishes a report each year on the work of the House's scrutiny select committees.

2. This is the first Report on the work of the Children, Schools and Families Committee, as constituted following the machinery of government changes in the summer of 2007. Unlike previous such reports by our predecessor, the Education and Skills Committee, this Report covers work undertaken during a parliamentary session rather than a calendar year. This change in practice enables us to include as an Annex the statistical information about the Committee's activities which is compiled on a sessional basis and which forms the Committee's entry in the Sessional Return.²

3. There are two main sections in this report. The first sets out the ways in which our work corresponds to the Objectives and Core tasks defined by the Liaison Committee for departmentally-related select committees. The second provides a short commentary on matters which we would particularly like to draw to the attention of the Liaison Committee.

4. We take this opportunity to thank all of those who have contributed to our work during this Session, whether by providing oral or written evidence, or by meeting us informally either on visits or at Westminster, or by providing specialist advice. Without that input, we would not be able to fulfil our remit.

1 The Liaison Committee considers general matters relating to the work of select committees.

2 Sessional Return for 2007–08 to be published as HC 1, Session 2008–09.

2 Meeting the Objectives

5. The Liaison Committee has defined Objectives and Core tasks for departmentally-related select committees. These are based upon the House's Standing Orders, which require those committees to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Government department concerned and its associated public bodies. Table 1 below sets out those Objectives; Table 2 matches them to the Committee's activities during the 2007–08 Session. Subsequent paragraphs provide supporting detail.

Table 1: Liaison Committee Objectives for departmentally-related select committees

Objective A: to examine and comment on the policy of the Department:

- proposals from the UK Government and European Commission in green papers, white papers, draft guidance etc.;
- areas of emerging policy, or where existing policy is deficient;
- any relevant published draft Bill;
- specific output from the Department expressed in documents or other decisions;

Objective B: to examine the expenditure of the Department:

- the expenditure plans and out-turn of the Department, its agencies and principal non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs);

Objective C: to examine the administration of the Department:

- the Department's Public Service Agreements, the associated targets and the statistical measurements employed;
- the work of the Department's executive agencies, NDPBs, regulators and other associated public bodies;
- major appointments made by the Department;
- the implementation of legislation and major policy initiatives;

Objective D: to assist the House in debate and decision, producing reports which are suitable for debate in the House and its committees, including Westminster Hall.

Table 2: Liaison Committee criteria and the Committee's inquiries in 2007–08

	Policy proposals	Emergent/deficient policy	Draft legislation	Departmental output	Public Expenditure	Public Service Agreements	Agencies and NDPBs	Major Appointments	Implementation of Legislation and policy	Debates in the House
Scoping seminar on schools issues	*	*		*					*	
Scoping seminar on children and families issues	*	*	*	*			*		*	
Testing and Assessment	*	*					*		*	
The Work of Ofsted					*	*	*			
Looked-After Children	*	*	*	*		*	*		*	
The Work of the DCSF and the Children's Plan	*	*		*	*	*	*		*	
Schools Commissioner					*	*	*			
Schools Adjudicator					*	*	*			
Social Mobility	*	*		*		*			*	
Diversity of School Provision		*		*					*	
Children Under the Radar		*		*		*	*		*	
Children and Young Persons Bill [Lords]	*			*						*
National Curriculum	*	*		*			*		*	
Early Years Foundation Stage	*	*		*			*		*	
Child Poverty	*	*		*	*	*			*	
Seminar on the Primary Review	*	*					*			
Public Expenditure					*					
The Learning and Skills Council	*	*		*		*	*		*	
Sustainable Schools and Building Schools for the Future				*	*		*		*	
Draft Apprenticeships Bill			*							
Teacher Training	*	*		*					*	

Policy

6. Bearing in mind that twenty years have elapsed since the passage of the Education Act 1988, we took an early decision to examine the three main pillars supporting education provision in England and rooted in the Act: testing and assessment of children’s levels of attainment, the national curriculum, and inspection of standards in schools. Inquiries into the first two “pillars” have dominated the Session, and we expect to examine school standards and inspection in the 2008–09 Session.

7. Few of the Department’s education policy proposals during the 2007–08 Session—leaving aside white papers and green papers—have not been relevant in some way to these over-arching inquiries. For instance, both the preparations for the introduction of Diploma courses and qualifications for 14–19-year-olds and the Government-sponsored review by Sir Jim Rose of the primary curriculum have played a major part in our inquiry into the National Curriculum.

8. The Government’s White Paper *Care Matters: Time for Change* has been fundamental to our other main inquiry during the session, into looked-after children. Some of the proposals in the White Paper which required primary legislation were incorporated into the Children and Young Persons Bill [*Lords*], which received Royal Assent in November 2008. The Committee published a Report on the Bill in advance of its Second Reading in this House, giving a view on the merits of the proposed changes to the statutory framework for the care of children and young people.³

9. Several of our evidence sessions have been stand-alone sessions, designed to explore areas where it appears that policy may be deficient. Examples include evidence on:

- children “under the radar”, or vulnerable children and young people who are not known to or in touch with local authority services, or who have specific circumstances or needs which have not been identified by services;⁴ and
- the Learning and Skills Council, specifically the proposal to transfer responsibility for commissioning education for 16–18-year-olds from the Council to local authorities.

10. Some evidence sessions have been held in response to acute concerns. In the summer of 2008, it became apparent that there were serious problems in the administration of the marking of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 tests in England. The Committee therefore held two quick-response evidence sessions, in July and September; and we intend to follow these up in 2009 once the results of the independent inquiry by Lord Sutherland have been published.

Draft legislation

11. The Government has published one bill in draft which falls at least partly within our remit. The Government’s intention is that the clauses of the Draft Apprenticeships Bill,

3 *Children and Young Persons Bill [Lords]*, First Report from the Committee, Session 2007–08, HC 359

4 See HC 331-i

published in July 2008, should be incorporated into a more wide-ranging education and skills bill in the 2008–09 Parliamentary Session. As responsibility for the Draft Bill is shared between the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, the two respective select committees undertook separate pre-legislative scrutiny. Both we and the IUSS Committee published Reports on the Draft Bill on 5 December 2008.⁵

Administration and expenditure

12. This Committee's predecessors published regular reports on public expenditure on education; we intend to maintain that practice. Accordingly, we took evidence in June from the Permanent Secretary and the Director General of Corporate Services at the Department. A further evidence session was held with the Secretary of State in July, examining overall policy issues as well as the Departmental Annual Report and efficiency savings in the light of the Gershon Review. We published a Report on public expenditure on 7 January 2009.⁶

Sponsored Bodies

13. The most prominent body for which the Department has any policy responsibility is Ofsted, which became the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills in April 2007. The Committee held two evidence sessions with Ofsted during the Session and will hold another, early in the 2008–09 Session, on the 2007/08 Annual Report of HM Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills.

14. We were surprised, however, that when Ofsted officials gave oral evidence in May 2008, days after publication of our Report on Testing and Assessment, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector admitted that she had not yet read the Report.⁷ The Committee Chairman subsequently wrote to the Chair of the Ofsted Board, drawing attention to this lapse in preparation. **We are disappointed that Ofsted did not give full and early attention to a Report by this Committee which was directly relevant to its work. We expect Ofsted to give a clear sign that it acknowledges the importance of the Committee's role in enabling it to be accountable to Parliament.**

15. Other sponsored bodies have given evidence during the course of policy-based inquiries, for instance:

- Partnerships for Schools, in its role in supporting delivery of the Government's Building Schools for the Future programme; and
- the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), which gave evidence to us several times, notably in relation to our Testing and Assessment inquiry and our investigations into the problems with the marking of the 2008 National Curriculum tests.

5 *The Draft Apprenticeships Bill*, Fourth Report from the Children, Schools and Families Committee, HC 1082, Session 2007–08; *Pre-legislative Scrutiny of the Draft Apprenticeships Bill*, Seventh Report from the Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills Committee, HC 1062-I, Session 2007–08

6 *Public Expenditure*, First Report from the Committee, Session 2008–09, HC 46

7 *The Work of Ofsted*, evidence given by HM Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills on 14 May 2008, HC 188-ii, Session 2007–08, Q 96 and Q 114

16. Ofqual, the qualifications regulator, has not yet been put on a statutory footing. However, we have taken evidence from the interim body, which operates as part of the QCA, in connection with its part in the National Curriculum test marking problems.

17. As noted above, we also took evidence from the Learning and Skills Council, a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, on proposals for redistribution of its functions.

Scrutiny of appointments

18. The Government proposed, in its Green Paper *The Governance of Britain*, that select committees should play a role in scrutiny of public appointments, particularly where the officeholder exercises statutory or other powers in relation to protecting the public's rights and interests.⁸ Four posts within the remit of the Department for Children, Schools and Families have been identified as suitable for such scrutiny:

- Chair of the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency
- Chair of Ofqual
- The Children's Commissioner for England
- HM Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills

The intention is that the Government's nominee for any of these posts should be subject to a pre-appointment hearing by this Committee and that our opinion, although not binding, should be borne in mind by Ministers in deciding whether or not to proceed with appointment. No occasion for a pre-appointment hearing for any of these positions has yet arisen: indeed, two of the posts listed above relate to bodies which have not yet been established on a statutory basis. We are satisfied with the list of posts as it stands but will monitor the possibility of adding others in future, if we believe that the protection of the public's rights and interests would merit it.

3 Reflections on working methods

Formats for Committee meetings

19. The Committee held 64 meetings in Session 2007–08, taking formal evidence at 45 of them and producing four reports (with two very substantial reports due to be published early in the 2008–09 Session based on work done in the 2007–08 Session). We have also convened seven informal seminars. This workload has necessitated two meetings a week for virtually every week of the Session.

20. We have continued our previous practice of holding seminars before we issue a formal call for evidence, in order to scope our inquiries, inform ourselves on the fundamental issues and establish which parties we may wish to call to give oral evidence. We are certain that these seminars have helped to make our inquiries more effective.

21. In certain circumstances, neither formal oral evidence nor seminars will be the best forum for gathering information. During our inquiry into looked-after children, we held two discussions in the round, without a table: one with foster carers and another with looked-after children. We learned a great deal from these detailed discussions about individuals' experiences, both positive and negative; and we gained the impression that participants appreciated the opportunity to air their views and to have their voices heard and their concerns understood. The personal accounts we heard were sometimes harrowing, and we are indebted to those who were willing to share with us their experiences.

Consequences of changes in machinery of government

22. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), established by the machinery of government changes in the summer of 2007, has a very broad remit. It covers the full range of education from 0 to 19 in a wide variety of educational settings, as well as all issues concerning children and families; some of these responsibilities are shared with other Departments. These shared responsibilities are reflected in the new Public Service Agreement (PSA) framework, announced in October 2007. For instance, responsibility for PSA 9, to halve the number of children in poverty by 2010–11 and to aim to eradicate child poverty by 2020, is shared between the Chancellor of the Exchequer (as lead Minister), the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, and the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions. The Department for Children, Schools and Families is one of ten different Government Departments contributing towards PSA 13, to improve children and young people's safety.

23. The Secretary of State has acknowledged to us the complexities arising from joint responsibilities, both for Government and for select committees.⁹ When he gave evidence in January 2008, we asked him how he thought we should hold the Government accountable for issues falling within our remit where responsibility was shared between the DCSF and one or more other departments. He told us:

9 Evidence given on 16 July 2008: Q 106, HC 835-ii

“There is a question for the Committee—and for Parliament—about how it chooses to manage its process of scrutiny and accountability, which is not for me to dictate. It is for us, as the Executive, to be clear about how we will manage our process for driving change. The Chancellor, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and I now have much clearer joint responsibilities for child poverty—they are clearly set out in the delivery arrangements—and we meet on a regular basis in government. It is a matter for you to decide how to scrutinise that. Clearly, that is more complex for this Committee than pretty much any other Committee in Parliament because I have a range of joint responsibilities in a number of areas. Whether I can deliver depends on my leverage and the co-operation of other Cabinet colleagues. Obviously, from my point of view, the more you scrutinise them and ask them whether they are doing what we need to do to meet these objectives, the better, but it would be quite wrong for me to start dictating how to do that.”¹⁰

24. As a result of this exchange, we decided to test relevant departments’ success in working together to achieve what are clearly very challenging targets on child poverty. In June 2008, we took evidence from the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, the Minister for Children, Young People and Families, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Minister for Employment and Welfare Reform, and the Chief Secretary to the Treasury. Assembling five senior Ministers at a single evidence session was not straightforward; but we have no doubt that this was a valuable exercise in holding to account joint responsibility within Government, and we commend the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families for his energy and conviction in enabling the evidence session to take place. We draw attention to his statement to us in July that “I was very pleased to come to the child poverty inquiry—the more scrutiny by this Committee of our joint responsibilities, the better”.¹¹

Government response on Testing and Assessment

25. The Department’s responses to our Reports in this Session have generally been prompt. We were, however, very disappointed with the stance taken in the response to our Third Report, on Testing and Assessment. We had concluded that there was too much national testing for school children in England, and we had urged the Government to decouple the multiple purposes of testing in such a way as to remove from schools the imperative to pursue test results at the cost of a rounded education for their pupils. To the extent that it was necessary to monitor national standards, we recommended sample testing specifically for that purpose.

26. Ofsted’s response cited clear evidence of teaching to the test and narrowing of the curriculum in both primary and secondary schools, including at GCSE and A Level. The Government, however, failed to accept the evidence, both from this Committee and from its own inspection service, on the prevalence of teaching to the test and narrowing of the curriculum, stating simply that these were not inevitable consequences of national testing.

10 Evidence given by the Secretary of State on 9 January 2008, published in the Second Report from the Committee, Session 2007–08, on *The Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Children’s Plan*, HC 213, Session 2007–08, Q 68.

11 HC 835-ii, Q 108

It did, however, undertake to gather further evidence on teaching to the test with a view to issuing guidance to schools on best practice. The Government rejected completely the recommendation in relation to sample testing to monitor national standards.

27. In July 2008 we became aware that the marking of the 2008 National Curriculum Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 results was not proceeding smoothly. The new contractor, ETS Europe, was apparently struggling to meet its deadlines with respect to the marking of scripts and issuing of results. Lord Sutherland was subsequently appointed by the Secretary of State and Ofqual to conduct an independent inquiry. When our Report on Testing and Assessment was debated in Westminster Hall on 9 October 2008, the DCSF Minister replying to the debate admitted that the Committee may not have “enjoyed” the Government’s response to our report but said that the Government “continue[d] to reflect on the Committee’s work in respect of assessment and testing”. In a statement to the House the following week, the Secretary of State announced that he was abolishing the requirement for schools to run Key Stage 3 tests for 14-year-olds with immediate effect. He stated further that he would be introducing a new accountability measure for schools, described as a “school report card”, intended to “give parents a new, simpler and more comprehensive way of understanding schools’ performance and achievements”.

28. We believe that the abolition of the Key Stage 3 tests is a good start. However, **we take this opportunity to urge the Government to reconsider its response to our findings on teaching to the test and narrowing the curriculum.**

Select committee membership

29. In 1979, when the departmentally-related select committees were set up, the number of places on select committees totalled approximately 270. In recent years, select committees seem to have become something of a growth industry: membership of committees has in many cases risen to 14; additional select and joint committees have been created; and the House agreed in November 2008 to establish eight regional select committees, with up to nine members in each case. Once members of regional select committees have been appointed, there will be approximately 480 posts on select committees and long-term joint committees. In the meantime, the tasks which it is envisaged that departmentally-related select committees will undertake have also increased. Pre-appointment hearings are one example; post-legislative scrutiny is another.

30. We welcome the extra responsibilities as a sign that the Government is prepared to encourage Parliament’s scrutiny role; but **we question whether the Government has fully appreciated the consequences of the expansion in the number of select committees and of the increase in size of several of them.** There is more pressure than ever on the pool of Members who do not hold a ministerial position (paid or otherwise), who are not front-bench spokesmen for the main Opposition party, and who are willing to devote time to select committee work. Three of our members already serve on another scrutiny committee which meets weekly. **We are fortunate to have a high degree of commitment among our members; but the supply of time—and indeed of eligible and willing Members—is finite, and care needs to be taken that standards of scrutiny are not put at risk.**

Annex

Children, Schools and Families Committee

For website access click on www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/csf.cfm

The Committee was nominated by the House of Commons on 8 November 2007.

Members

Sheerman, Mr Barry (Chairman from 12.11.07)	61 out of 64
Afryie, Adam (added 17.12.07 discharged 13.10.08)	3 out of 45
Brooke, Annette	50 out of 64
Butler, Ms Dawn	15 out of 64
Carswell, Mr Douglas	35 out of 64
Chaytor, Mr David	55 out of 64
Heppell, Mr John	44 out of 64
Hodgson, Mrs Sharon (added 26.11.07)	24 out of 61
Holmes, Paul (added 28.1.08)	36 out of 50
Mactaggart, Fiona	57 out of 64
Miller, Maria (discharged 17.12.07)	0 out of 8
Pelling, Mr Andrew	6 out of 64
Ryan, Joan (discharged 26.11.07)	2 out of 3
Slaughter, Mr Andy	31 out of 64
Stuart, Mr Graham	36 out of 64
Timpson, Mr Edward (added 13.10.08)	9 out of 11
Waltho, Lynda	29 out of 64
Williams, Stephen (discharged 28.1.08)	10 out of 14

Meetings attended

Overall Attendance:

56.0 %

Total number of meetings: 64

Of which:

Number of meetings at which oral evidence was taken	45
Number of times oral evidence was taken partly or wholly in private	0
Number of wholly private meetings	19
Number of concurrent meetings with other committees	0

Other activities

Informal meetings	3
Conferences/Seminars hosted	0

Staff

Details of the permanent staff of the Committee during the Session can be found in the Committee's publications.

Specialist Advisers during the Session

Professor Bob Hudson, Professor Christine Pascal OBE, Dame Gillian Pugh DBE, Professor Peter Roberts, Teresa Smith, Professor Alan Smithers, Professor Kathy Sylva, Mr Tony Travers, Professor Geoff Whitty and Professor Dylan Wiliam.

Witnesses

Oral evidence was given during the Session by the following categories of witnesses:

Number of appearances by:

Cabinet Ministers	5
Other Ministers	11
Members of the House of Lords (of whom 2 were also Ministers)	2

Number of appearances by officials from, or representatives of:

Department for Children, Schools and Families	8
Children's Workforce Development Council	1
General Teaching Council	1
Learning and Skills Council	1
Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted)	3
Partnerships for Schools	1
Qualifications and Curriculum Authority	5
Youth Justice Board	1
Appearances by other witnesses	125

Overseas Visits

Date	Destination	Members	Staff	Purpose	Cost
15-17.6.08	Copenhagen, Denmark	Sheerman, Carswell, Chaytor, Heppell, Hodgson, Holmes, Mactaggart	2	Inquiry into Looked-after Children	£10,291.90
12-17.10.08	Toronto and Ottawa, Canada	Sheerman, Brooke, Carswell, Chaytor, Heppell, Hodgson, Holmes	2	Inquiry into the National Curriculum and Teacher Training	£41,823.83

Visits to European Institutions

None.

UK Visits

Date	Destination	Members	Staff	Purpose	Cost
19.5.08	NCH Phoenix Project, Merton ^A	Sheerman, Chaytor, Mactaggart	3	Inquiry into Looked-after Children	£42.08
3.7.08	The Michael Tippett School, Lambeth ^A	Sheerman	1	Inquiry into Sustainable Schools and Building Schools for the Future	£38.44

Date	Destination	Members	Staff	Purpose	Cost
21.7.08	Hampshire County Council ^A	Sheerman, Holmes	2	Inquiry into Looked-after Children	£208.40

^A Travel in a representative capacity

Reports and Oral and Written Evidence

Title	HC No. (2007–08)	Date of publication	Government reply
First Report: <i>Children and Young Persons Bill [Lords]</i>	359	20.3.08	Received 11.6.08: published as Third Special Report Session 2007–08
Second Report: <i>The Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Children's Plan</i>	213	24.4.08	Received 24.6.08: published as Fourth Special Report Session 2007–08
Third Report: <i>Testing and Assessment</i>	169-I	13.5.08	Ofsted, received 8.7.08; DCSF, received 15.7.08: published as Fifth Special Report Session 2007–08
Oral and Written Evidence: <i>Testing and Assessment</i>	169-II	13.5.08	Not applicable
Fourth Report: <i>The Draft Apprenticeships Bill</i>	1082	5.12.08	Awaited
First Special Report: <i>Creative Partnerships and the Curriculum: Government Response to the Eleventh Report from the Education and Skills Committee, Session 2006–07</i>	266	28.1.08	Not applicable
Second Special Report: <i>Special Educational Needs: Assessment and Funding: Government Response to the Tenth Report from the Education and Skills Committee, Session 2006–07</i>	298	4.2.08	Not applicable
Third Special Report: <i>Children and Young Persons Bill [Lords]: Government Response to the Committee's First Report of Session 2007–08</i>	711	16.6.08	Not applicable
Fourth Special Report: <i>The Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Children's Plan: Government Response to the Committee's Second Report of Session 2007–08</i>	888	7.7.08	Not applicable
Fifth Special Report: <i>Testing and Assessment: Government and Ofsted Responses to the Committee's Third Report of Session 2007–08</i>	1003	22.7.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence: <i>Schools Commissioner and Schools Adjudicator</i>	243-i	3.7.08	Not applicable

Title	HC No. (2007–08)	Date of publication	Government reply
Oral Evidence: <i>Social Mobility</i>	281-i	23.10.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence: <i>Children "under the radar"</i>	331-i	24.6.08	Not applicable
Oral and Written Evidence: <i>Early Years Foundation Stage</i>	600-i	5.8.08	Not applicable
Oral and Written Evidence: <i>Child Poverty</i>	683-i	17.7.08	Not applicable
Oral Evidence: <i>Learning and Skills Council</i>	960-i	25.11.08	Not applicable
Corrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>The Work of Ofsted</i>	188 i-ii	18.6.08	Not applicable
Corrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Diversity of School Provision</i>	311-i	18.2.08	Not applicable
Corrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Diversity of School Provision: Academies</i>	311-ii	4.6.08	Not applicable
Corrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Diversity of School Provision: Faith Schools</i>	311-iii	4.6.08	Not applicable
Corrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Diversity of School Provision: Links Between Independent and Maintained Schools</i>	311-iv	4.6.08	Not applicable
Corrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>National Curriculum</i>	651 i-iii	18.11.08	Not applicable
Corrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Public Expenditure: Department for Children, Schools and Families</i>	835 i-ii	12.8.08	Not applicable
Corrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>National Curriculum tests</i>	980 i-ii	14.11.08	Not applicable
Corrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Sustainable Schools and Building Schools for the Future</i>	981-i	14.11.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Diversity of School Provision: Trust Schools</i>	311-v	14.11.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Looked-after Children</i>	442-i	25.3.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Looked-after Children</i>	442-ii	31.3.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Looked-after Children</i>	442-iii	23.4.08	Not applicable

Title	HC No. (2007–08)	Date of publication	Government reply
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Looked-after Children</i>	442-iv	2.5.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Looked-after Children</i>	442-v	14.5.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Looked-after Children</i>	442-vi	4.6.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Looked-after Children</i>	442-vii	26.6.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Looked-after Children</i>	442-viii	7.7.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Looked-after Children</i>	442-ix	30.10.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Looked-after Children</i>	442-x	3.11.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>National Curriculum</i>	651-iv	13.10.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>National Curriculum</i>	651-v	4.11.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>National Curriculum</i>	651-vi	12.11.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>National Curriculum</i>	651-vii	19.11.08	Not applicable
Uncorrected Evidence published on the Internet: <i>National Curriculum</i>	651-viii	26.11.08	Not applicable
Written Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Diversity of School Provision: Academies</i>		17.3.08	Not applicable
Written Evidence published on the Internet: <i>National Curriculum</i>		12.6.08	Not applicable
Written Evidence published on the Internet: <i>The Work of Ofsted</i>		26.6.08	Not applicable
Written Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Looked-after Children</i>		7.7.08	Not applicable
Written Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Sustainable Schools and Building Schools for the Future</i>		18.7.08	Not applicable
Written Evidence published on the Internet: <i>Public Expenditure: Department for Children, Schools and Families</i>		12.8.08	Not applicable

Government replies to Reports for Session 2006–07

Reply to the Education and Skills Committee's Tenth Report: *Special Educational Needs: Assessment and Funding*, received 23.1.08, published as HC 298 (4.2.08).

Reply to the Education and Skills Committee's Eleventh Report: *Creative Partnerships and the Curriculum*, received 16.1.08, published as HC 266 (28.1.08).

Formal Minutes

The Formal Minutes of the Committee were published electronically after each meeting of the Committee. They are available on the Committee's website at http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/csf.cfm.

Divisions

Date	Subject
7.5.08	One, On consideration of an Amendment proposed to the Motion that the Chairman's draft Report on Testing and Assessment be read a second time

Debates

Committee reports were debated on 1 occasion in Westminster Hall. Committee reports were tagged on the Order Paper as being relevant to debates in the House of Commons on 1 occasion. Further details can be found in the Committee's Sessional Report.

Number of oral evidence sessions for each inquiry during the Session

Inquiry	Number of oral evidence sessions
Child Poverty	1
Children and Young Persons Bill [Lords]	1
Children under the radar	1
Diversity of School Provision	5
Draft Apprenticeships Bill	2
Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Learning and Skills Council	1
Looked-after Children	10
National Curriculum	8
National Curriculum Tests	2
Public Expenditure: Department for Children, Schools and Families	2
Schools Commissioner and Schools Adjudicator	1
Social Mobility	1

Inquiry	Number of oral evidence sessions
Sustainable Schools and Building Schools for the Future	1
Testing and Assessment	6
The Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Children's Plan	1
The Work of Ofsted	2
Total	46^A

^A At one meeting of the Committee evidence was taken on more than one inquiry. Therefore the total in this table does not match the figure given above for the number of meetings at which oral evidence was taken.

Formal Minutes

Monday 8 December 2008

Members present:

Mr Barry Sheerman, in the Chair

Annette Brooke

Mr John Heppell

Mrs Sharon Hodgson

Paul Holmes

Fiona Mactaggart

Draft Report (*The Work of the Committee in 2007–08*), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 30 read and agreed to.

Annex agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Second Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman make the Report to the House.

[Adjourned till Wednesday 10 December at 9.15 am

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

Session 2008–09

First Report	Public Expenditure	HC 46
Second Report	The Work of the Committee in 2007–08	HC 47

Session 2007–08

First Special Report	Creative Partnerships and the Curriculum: Government Response to the Eleventh Report from the Education and Skills Committee, Session 2006–07	HC 266
Second Special Report	Special Educational Needs: Assessment and Funding: Government Response to the Tenth Report from the Education and Skills Committee, Session 2006–07	HC 298
First Report	Children and Young Persons Bill [Lords]	HC 359 (HC 711)
Second Report	The Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Children's Plan	HC 213 (HC 888)
Third Report	Testing and Assessment	HC 169-I and II (HC 1003)
Fourth Report	The Draft Apprenticeships Bill	HC 1082