

## **NICCY Summary: Written Assembly Questions week of 12<sup>th</sup> December 2014**

- **E-Safety**
- **Internet Safety Implications**
- **Child Poverty Alliance**
- **Flexibility for Primary School Starting Age**
- **Budgetary Constraints on Staffing Levels**
- **Literacy and Numeracy Assistance – Post Primary School**
- **Pupils with Dyslexia**
- **Autism**
- **2014/15 Budget**
- **School Travel Schemes**
- **Shared Education Sector**
- **Education Maintenance Allowance**
- **United Youth Programme**

- **Relocation of Paediatric Cardiac Surgery**
- **Student Financial Assistance**
- **Respite Care**
- **Budget Reductions**
- **Autism Spectrum Disorder Service**
- **Service Framework for Children and Young People**
- **Delivering Social Change**
- **Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services**
- **Child Sexual Exploitation**
- **Issue of Young Shooters**
- **Teaching Staff at Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre**

## Office of First and Deputy First Minister

### E-Safety

**Mr Jonathan Craig (DUP – Lagan Valley)** - To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister, in light of the recent Spotlight programme highlighting the inappropriate and unauthorised use of local teenagers' photographs on pornographic websites, for an update on e-safety.

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The issues raised by this programme were both disturbing and alarming. Evidence was highlighted on the posting of images of schoolgirls from Northern Ireland on an adult pornographic website. These practices were shocking and entirely unacceptable. They are a sharp reminder of the online dangers which children and young people face such as pornography, online grooming and cyberbullying. The programme reinforces the message that OFMDFM has been highlighting and promoting over the last few years in respect of e-safety issues. There is no room for complacency here.

To increase public awareness of these dangers, Junior Minister Bell and Junior Minister McCann have participated in events such as Safer Internet Day including visits to local schools and engaging with the UK Safer Internet Centre.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has been working closely with OFMDFM on e-safety matters. It has been agreed that the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland should be commissioned formally to develop a Northern Ireland e-safety strategy on behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is currently seeking the support of Executive Ministers to obtain additional resources to enable the Safeguarding Board to take forward this work on the development of a Northern Ireland e-safety strategy.

A follow-up meeting is scheduled to take place involving OFMDFM, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Safeguarding Board. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss issues arising from the Spotlight programme including the most appropriate way forward in relation to the 'gapping and mapping' exercise. **(Oral Question)**

[Back to Top](#)

## **Internet Safety Implications**

**Mrs Sandra Overend (UUP – Mid Ulster)** - To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their assessment of the internet safety implications of the issues raised by the BBC NI Spotlight Programme broadcast on the 11 November 2014.

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The issues raised by this programme were both disturbing and alarming. Evidence was highlighted on the posting of images of schoolgirls from Northern Ireland on an adult pornographic website. These practices were shocking and entirely unacceptable. They are a sharp reminder of the online dangers which children and young people face such as pornography, online grooming and cyberbullying. The programme reinforces the message that OFMDFM has been highlighting and promoting over the last few years in respect of e-safety issues. There is no room for complacency here.

To increase public awareness of these dangers, Junior Minister Bell and Junior Minister McCann have participated in events such as Safer Internet Day including visits to local schools and engaging with the UK Safer Internet Centre.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has been working closely with OFMDFM on e-safety matters. It has been agreed that the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland should be commissioned formally to develop a Northern Ireland e-safety strategy on behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is currently seeking the support of Executive Ministers to obtain additional resources to enable the Safeguarding Board to take forward this work on the development of a Northern Ireland e-safety strategy.

A follow-up meeting is scheduled to take place involving OFMDFM, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Safeguarding Board. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss issues arising from the Spotlight programme including the most appropriate way forward in relation to the 'gapping and mapping' exercise.

**(Oral Question)**

[Back to Top](#)

## **Child Poverty Alliance**

**Mr Máirtín Ó Muilleoir (Sinn Féin – South Belfast)** - To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister what proposals they have to work with the Child Poverty Alliance, in light of its recent "Beneath the Surface: Child Poverty in Northern Ireland" report.

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Child Poverty Alliance has been consulted in the development of the revised Child Poverty Strategy. Officials met with representatives of the Alliance during public consultation and since the close of the consultation. The Alliance was also invited to participate in the review of the previous Child Poverty Strategy. The issues raised by representatives of the Alliance and other stakeholders have been taken on board in drafting the new Strategy.

OFMDFM sponsored the launch of 'Beneath the Surface: Child Poverty in Northern Ireland' Report on 3 November. The Child Poverty Alliance's report highlights a number of key issues, including the problem of 'in-work poverty', childcare and the impact of poverty on education and calls for further dialogue about what needs to be done to tackle child poverty.

Tackling poverty and disadvantage is a priority of this Executive and we recognise that this will take a sustained and concerted action from many agencies and organisations and key stakeholders through effective partnership working.

Looking forward, it is proposed that the Child Poverty Alliance will be centrally involved in assisting in the implementation of the new Child Poverty Strategy, which we plan to publish shortly. **(Oral Question)**

[Back to Top](#)

## Department of Education

### Flexibility for Primary School Starting Age

**Miss Michelle McIlveen (DUP – Strangford)** - To ask the Minister of Education to detail the date for the launch of the consultation relating to proposed legislation to permit flexibility for primary school starting age.

**Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education):** The consultation on proposals to introduce deferral of school starting age in exceptional circumstances will be launched on 15 December and will last 12 weeks. **(10th December)**

[Back to Top](#)

### Budgetary Constraints on Staffing Levels

**Ms Claire Sugden (Ind – East Londonderry)** - To ask the Minister of Education for his assessment of the impact on staffing levels in schools as a result of budgetary constraints within his Department.

**Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education):** Approximately 77% of the Education budget is made up of staff costs. Therefore, in order for the Department to manage within the impending budget constraints, there will need to be a significant reduction in the number of posts across the Education sector. My initial estimate is that at least 1,000 teaching and at least 1,500 non-teaching jobs will need to exit the system at 1 April 2015. This number will, inevitably, increase should the timing of the redundancies extend further into the 2015/16 financial year. **(10<sup>th</sup> December)**

[Back to Top](#)

## Literacy and Numeracy Assistance – Post Primary School

**Mr Gregory Campbell (DUP – East Londonderry)** – To ask the Minister of Education what plans are in place to help with pupils requiring literacy and numeracy assistance in post-primary schools from September 2014.

**Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education):** First and foremost teachers are best placed to identify pupils requiring additional support with literacy and numeracy and to determine the most appropriate action to meet individual pupil needs. However, schools may require additional support to address low achievement in literacy and numeracy particularly amongst socially disadvantaged pupils. Therefore, I am continuing to provide funding and support for a range of additional interventions which focus on improving pupil outcomes.

In the post-primary sector the interventions include the Delivering Social Change (DSC) Literacy and Numeracy Programme through which 167.5 full-time equivalent teachers have been appointed in 140 post-primary schools; a literacy and numeracy CPD project which will be delivered to primary and post-primary schools in the next financial year; and the strategic development fund to support Area Learning Communities to develop effective approaches to improving literacy and numeracy levels amongst disadvantaged pupils.

Through the DSC programme, ELB officers are working with the schools to identify effective interventions which are delivering positive outcomes for pupils. This good practice is already being disseminated to schools through face to face training sessions, and via the DSC web page on the Western Education and Library Board (WELB) website. ESAGS.tv is also a valuable tool for the dissemination of best practice.

In addition, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) is working with nineteen post-primary schools in an improvement programme (Promoting Improvement in English and Maths – PIEM) to raise the standards achieved by the pupils in English and mathematics. The ETI has also published a Survey of Best Practice in English and Mathematics in Post-Primary Schools (October 2013) which provides a useful resource for schools. The weblink is: <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/surveys-evaluations/surveys-evaluations-post-primary/surveys-evaluations-post-primary-2013/best-practice-english-and-mathematics-in-post-primary-schools.htm>

I also recognise the need to focus on families and communities and I am continuing to fund community-based programmes which have a specific focus on positive educational outcomes. (10<sup>th</sup> December) [Back to Top](#)

## **Pupils with Dyslexia**

**Mr Chris Hazzard (Sinn Féin – South Down)** - To ask the Minister of Education

- (i) how many pupils have dyslexia;
- (ii) what support is offered to these pupils; and
- (iii) what level of dyslexia screening occurs in schools.

**Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education):** The 2013/14 School Census reported a total of 8,545\* pupils with dyslexia. The Education and Library Boards (ELBs) have advised that a range of special education support and provision is available to parents and schools for a child identified with dyslexia, including the following:

- dyslexia awareness training for schools (and parents) as requested by schools to enhance the capacity of teachers to identify and respond appropriately in addressing dyslexia;
- all Educational Psychologists (EPs) are trained and skilled in the assessment and identification of dyslexia. Following the identification of dyslexia EPs provide a comprehensive range of support including recommendations and resources to parents and schools to assist the pupil achieve his/her potential;
- a range of innovative strategies, resources and computer assisted programmes are available to pupils with dyslexia for whom more traditional methods are unsuccessful;
- some schools have achieved or are working towards achievement of Dyslexia Friendly status usually in association with the British Dyslexia Association (BDA). Schools are supported by the Board services in achieving this award;
- a range of measures to help those children and young people identified as having dyslexia under examination conditions.

When children who are thought to have dyslexia are put forward for assessment at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice (COP), they may be screened for additional Board support by EPs or psychology assistants. A range of cognitive and attainment tests are used in the identification of dyslexia with agreed five board criteria for additional Stage 3 and Stage 5 support applied in each case.

In addition DE is funding the SEN Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Literacy Project which is delivered jointly by Stranmillis and St Mary’s University Colleges. This project is being funded for 3 years and will be completed at the end of March 2015. The project, which offers specialist training accredited by the British Dyslexia Association to all primary schools, enables teachers to identify children with literacy difficulties, including



dyslexia, assess their individual needs and provide appropriate interventions. ELBs will continue to review their services in order to provide improved assistance to those children and young people with dyslexia.

\*This figure includes funded children in voluntary and private preschools, nursery schools, primary (including nursery, reception and year 1-7 classes, post primary and special schools. **(10<sup>th</sup> December)**

[Back to Top](#)

## Autism

**Mrs Sandra Overend (UUP – Mid Ulster)** - To ask the Minister of Education to detail the level of access to support class placement for children with autism in Key Stage 1 and 2 in mainstream schools, broken down by Education and Library Board area.

**Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education):** The Education and Library Boards (ELBs) have advised that support class placement is one of a range of specialist services provided to support children with autism. The needs of each child, including those at Key Stages 1 and 2, will be unique depending on the specific presentation of their condition and the nature and extent of the support will, therefore, be determined by the extent of each child’s special educational needs. Support may, if appropriate, include placement in an autism specific class attached to mainstream schools which will provide opportunities for children with autism to be educated in small school settings with appropriate interventions for their individual needs. **(10<sup>th</sup> December)**

[Back to Top](#)

## 2014/15 Budget

**Mr Danny Kinahan (UUP – South Antrim)** - To ask the Minister of Education what parts of his current 2014/15 budget is legally and contractually committed; and what remains unallocated.

**Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education):** In relation to the resource budget approximately 80% is allocated for staff costs across of the education sector and as such this expenditure is deemed contractually committed.

There are also a number of other substantial contractual commitments, such as £39m funding for provision of ICT services for grant-aided schools and £38m funding for Public Private Partnership contracts. In addition the Department has a statutory responsibility to provide funding for maintenance of the Schools Estate to ensure it complies with all Health and Safety requirements and the Disability Discrimination Act. In 2014-15 £17 million has been provided for this purpose.

The Department and its ALB's also have a statutory duty to pay rates across the Education sector. In the 2013-14 financial year, this accounted for £59.6million of the Education Budget.

The remainder of the resource budget while not wholly contractual is allocated to support Ministerial priorities and the Executive's Programme for Government commitments. In addition as 8 months of the year have now passed the amount of funding not contractually committed is substantially reduced.

The programmes funded from the capital budget are largely contractual in their nature, with an estimate of 80% currently contractually committed across the various capital programmes.

I can confirm both my 2014-15 Resource budget and Capital budget have been fully allocated. **(10<sup>th</sup> December)**

[Back to Top](#)

### **School Travel Schemes**

**Mr Jim Allister (TUV – North Antrim)** - To ask the Minister of Education whether there are any schemes in place, or schemes he would consider, whereby school children required to walk to school or to buses, particularly along country roads, are supplied with high visibility jackets.

**Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education):** The safety of children when walking to school or to bus stops rests with their parents and I am not aware of any current or planned schemes to supply pupils with high visibility jackets. However, to assist parents and schools, the Department of Education (DE) has issued guidance to schools with respect to pupil safety through the design of school uniforms.

Much of that guidance applies with equal effect to clothing worn by pupils, such as an overcoat, which is not part of a school uniform. The wearing of a school uniform is not governed by legislation but falls to schools to determine. The day to day management of schools, including school uniform policy, is a matter for school Principals, subject to any directions that might be given by the Board of Governors. Section 5 of this guidance covers travelling to school and emphasises that the safety of children is paramount. It highlights the need for pupils to be visible to drivers and other road users as they make their way between home, bus stops and school. It asks schools to take this into account when designing their uniform and to consider using reflective materials and to encourage the wearing of high visibility items. The guidance is available on the Department's website: [www.deni.gov.uk/index/support-and-development-2/school\\_uniform.htm](http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/support-and-development-2/school_uniform.htm)

Further to this, the Department of the Environment (DOE) has confirmed that each year it offers Practical Child Pedestrian Safety Training (PCPST) to selected primary schools. The objective of PCPST is to help children in Years 3, 4 and 5 to acquire and develop pedestrian skills, observe dangers and practice crossing roads safely via supervised training walks in the locale of their school. This includes guidance on the benefits of wearing reflective and fluorescent clothing and accessories.

The road safety teaching aid calendar is provided to every classroom in every primary school and provides an opportunity for teachers to deliver a weekly road safety message to children. This includes guidance on making sure child pedestrians are as visible to other road users as possible.

In relation to post-primary schools, a number of different education packs have now been created by DOE and issued to every post primary school. Each pack, which contains a DVD, a worksheet and teacher's notes, is centred on the road safety message or theme used in a road safety campaign. These multimedia resources are informative and very effective in getting road safety messages across. One education pack 'Respect everyone's journey' is aimed at children in years 8, 9 and 10 and provides information and guidance on the need for pedestrians to wear reflective or fluorescent clothing.

A new leaflet 'Be Safe, Be Seen' has also been created and made available online and in hard copy. The leaflet provides detailed guidance on how pedestrians can make themselves safer by wearing reflective or fluorescent clothing. **(10<sup>th</sup> December)**

[Back to Top](#)

## Shared Education Sector

**Mr Jim Allister (TUV – North Antrim)** - To ask the Minister of Education, given that there is no legal definition or status for shared education, why the Education and Training Inspectorate is recruiting assessors for appointment to "the Shared Education sector"; and what is the definition of "shared education sector" that is being deployed and in respect of which criteria are being set.

**Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education):** The public advertisement for Associate Assessors to work in schools in relation to Shared Education stated:

- “ETI wishes to appoint Associate Assessors to support inspection and other aspects of policy work in pre-school, inclusion, special and alternative education, youth, Irish medium education, and shared education (primary and post-primary phases). The period of tenure (initially for three years) will be reviewed on an annual basis.”

The definition of Shared Education being used by ETI is as follows: *Shared Education is the organisation and delivery of education so that it:*

- Meets the need of, and provides for the education together of pupils from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status.
- Involves schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance arrangements; and
- Delivers educational benefits to pupils, promotes the efficient and effective use of resources, and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

Specifically, Shared Education involves the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community background to learn together. **(10<sup>th</sup> December)**

[Back to Top](#)

## Department of Employment and Learning

### Education Maintenance Allowance

**Ms Claire Sugden (Ind – East Londonderry)** - To ask the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the number of students who are currently in receipt of an Education Maintenance Allowance; and what assurance he can give that money for this will be ring fenced in light of current budgetary pressures.

**Dr Farry (Minister for Employment and Learning):** In academic year 2013/14 there were 21,629 students in receipt of the means tested Educational Maintenance Allowance and it is anticipated that a similar number of students will be eligible in academic year 2014/15. The Educational Maintenance Allowance estimated budget requirement for financial year 2014/15 is £23.1 million and I can confirm that this is ring-fenced.

In relation to future funding, my Department is currently considering all options for budget savings across all spending lines. Final decisions on how the cuts will be managed will not be made until a public consultation has been completed and the detail of the cuts has been confirmed. However, my Department is preparing and planning for the financial challenges that cuts in the region of 11% will bring and is in the process of considering its work priorities to determine how the budget cuts can be absorbed. **(8<sup>th</sup> December)**

[Back to Top](#)

### Student Financial Assistance

**Ms Claire Sugden (Ind – East Londonderry)** - To ask the Minister for Employment and Learning whether the financial assistance for students, who have been in foster care or care of social services for a significant period of time, that this currently provided by the University of Ulster and Queen's University, including Stranmillis University College, will be ring-fenced following budget cuts to his Department's budget.

**Dr Farry (Minister for Employment and Learning):** Access to Success, my Department's regional strategy for widening participation, has identified care leavers as being under-represented in higher education.

Through the submission of annual Widening Access and Participation Plans the Department is able to monitor and review the work that each institution is doing to widen

participation, which includes the work they are doing to encourage those from a care background to enter higher education and the subsequent support they are offered to progress through their chosen course.

Each year the higher education institutions re-invest a significant proportion of their additional fee income to attract and retain students from groups that are identified as under-represented in Access to Success. However, while the Department encourages higher education institutions to make additional investment in support for students who have been in foster care or care of social services, it is a matter for each of the individual institutions to decide on the quantum of this support depending on individual circumstances. **(8th December)**

[Back to Top](#)

### **United Youth Programme**

**Mr Dominic Bradley (SDLP – Newry and Armagh)** - To ask the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the application process for the United Youth Programme; and when successful applicants will be notified.

**Dr Farry (Minister for Employment and Learning):** The Department for Employment and Learning is leading on a co-design process to develop the United Youth Programme. Organisations have submitted concept proposals. Those proposals demonstrating the most potential will engage in a further development phase, which will conclude with the selection of pilots, to commence in 2015.

While my Department has the necessary funding to support the pilots during the current financial year, sufficient central funding is required to allow this work to be completed during the 2015/16 financial year. On clarification of the budget, organisations will receive notification of the outcome of their pilot concept proposals. **(12<sup>th</sup> December)**

[Back to Top](#)

## Department of Health

### Relocation of Paediatric Cardiac Surgery

**Mr Robin Swann (UUP – North Antrim)** - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the relocation of paediatric cardiac surgery to Dublin is based on the new build children's hospital being fully equipped.

**Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety):** I will announce the plans for the relocation of paediatric cardiac surgery in early 2015, subject to the outcome of the current consultation which ends on 23 January 2015. Planning for the revised service model, which I announced in my Oral Statement to the Assembly on 14 October 2014, is proceeding on the basis of the existing facilities in both Belfast and Dublin, and implementation is therefore not dependent upon the proposed new hospitals at either location. **(8<sup>th</sup> December)**

[Back to Top](#)

### Respite Care

**Mr Fearghal McKinney (SDLP – South Belfast)** - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail

- (i) his Department's; and
- (ii) the Health and Social Care Trust's statutory obligations to provide equal access to respite care for children living with a disability.

**Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety):** The statutory provision governing children in Northern Ireland is the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (the Order). Article 21 of the Order requires an authority (defined as the Health and Social Care Board or a Health and Social Care Trust) to provide accommodation for a child in need, even though the person who has parental responsibility for him is able to provide him with accommodation, if the authority considers that to do so would safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Under Article 17(c) a child shall be taken to be in need if he is a disabled child. **(10<sup>th</sup> December)**

[Back to Top](#)

## Budget Reductions

**Mr Pat Ramsey (SDLP – Foyle)** - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, with budget reductions of 10.8 per cent, to detail the services he has identified as

- (i) 'ring fenced' from further cuts; and
- (ii) priorities in terms of proposed reduction of spending.

**Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety):** My Department launched its consultation on the Executive's draft budget for 2015/16 on 26 November. The consultation document highlights the potential implications of the draft budget proposals on health and social care. This is an important element in informing the Executive's decisions on the final budget for 2015/16, which is due to be published in January 2015. Final decisions on expenditure allocations can only be made once the final budget for my Department has been confirmed. In terms of savings proposals, I can confirm that I am committed to maximising the resources available for front line health and social care services. **(11<sup>th</sup> December)**

[Back to Top](#)

## Autism Spectrum Disorder Service

**Mr Mitchel McLaughlin (Sinn Féin – South Antrim)** - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust autism spectrum disorder service, to detail

- (i) the number of staff employed;
- (ii) the job descriptions of staff;
- (iii) when the service is available;
- (iv) how many families the service supports; and
- (v) the number of staff currently absent due to
  - (a) long term illness;
  - (b) maternity leave; and
  - (c) secondment; and what effect this has on service provision.

**Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety):** The table in the attached Annex provides the detail requested in relation to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust's Autism Spectrum Disorder Service.



## Annex

### Northern Health and Social Care Trust's Autism Spectrum Disorder Service.

Question	Answer
<b>(i) The number of staff employed</b>	<p>There is one ASD Co-ordinator.</p> <p>There are 8 staff employed within the adult ASD service (WTE 3.2) and 11 staff employed in the paediatric ASD service (WTE 7.6).</p> <p>There is also 1.2 WTE sessional input provided to the diagnostic clinics.</p>
<b>(ii) The job descriptions of staff</b>	<p>In line with the Regional Autistic Spectrum Disorder Network 'Six Steps of Autism Care', Autism Adult Care Pathway and the NICE guidelines, all staff within the ASD service provide and deliver a high quality assessment and diagnostic service for children, young people and adults where concerns regarding ASD have been identified and provide support and intervention to children, young people and adults with a diagnosis of ASD and their families.</p>
<b>(iii) When the service is available</b>	<p>The paediatric ASD service is centralised through an office in Ballymena and the adult ASD service is centralised through an office in Ballymoney. Delivery of the service occurs across all geographical areas of the Northern Trust and an open referral system operates, with standardised referral criteria. The paediatric ASD service is available for those aged 2-18 years (19 years if attending a special school) and resident within the Northern Trust geographical area.</p>

<p><b>(iv) How many families the service supports</b></p>	<p>Between 1 January 2010 and 31 October 2014, 1,413 children have received a diagnosis of ASD and have been offered post diagnostic support. In addition the service provides intervention for those with a historical diagnosis, the numbers who have received this service is not however currently available.</p> <p>Since the implementation of the adult pathway, 39 adults have received a diagnosis of ASD. In addition to this, the adult intervention service currently has involvement with 63 service users and their families to offer support.</p> <p>Individuals over 16 years who have a diagnosis of ASD can also avail of support via the Northern Adult Autism Advice Service (NAAAS). Individuals and/or their family can attend this weekly drop in service and can be provided with support from the multiagency team.</p>
<p><b>(v) The current number of staff currently absent to</b></p> <p><b>(a) long term illness</b></p> <p><b>(b) maternity leave</b></p> <p><b>(c) secondment; and what effect this has on service provision.</b></p>	<p><b>(a)</b> There is currently one staff member (0.63 WTE) absent on long term illness. From the sessional work, there is one staff member (0.2 WTE) who is employed by NEELB, on long term illness.</p> <p><b>(b)</b> Within the Paediatric ASD service, as at 30 November 2014, there are two members of staff absent due to maternity leave (1.65 WTE) although 0.6 WTE professional cover is in place.</p> <p><b>(c)</b> There are currently no absences due to secondment.</p>

	<p>Due to the significantly increasing number of referrals to the ASD service and current staff absences, the service is not able to meet the present demand of commencing assessment within the 13 week recommendation and offering intervention within the 13 week timeframe.</p>
--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

(11<sup>th</sup> December)

[Back to Top](#)

### Service Framework for Children and Young People

**Miss Michelle McIlveen (DUP – Strangford)** - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the Service Framework for Children and Young People.

**Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety):** The overall aim of the Service Framework for Children and Young People is to improve the health and well being of children and young people in Northern Ireland.

It has been developed over a period of time and the draft version of the framework was issued for public consultation on Friday 7 November 2014. It contains 34 standards covering 6 themes and a copy of the consultation documents together with a Children’s (easy read) version have been published on my Department’s website.

Following public consultation, responses will be reviewed and I anticipate that the final Framework will be launched for implementation before next summer. **(Oral Question)**

[Back to Top](#)

## **Delivering Social Change**

**Mr Trevor Lunn (APNI – Lagan Valley)** - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what discussions he has had with the First and deputy First Minister on the provision of money to the Health and Social Care Trusts under Delivering Social Change.

**Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety):** My Department has the lead for 2 of the 6 Delivering Social Change Programmes Direct Family Support – the Family Support Hubs and Support for Parents Signature Programmes.

The DSC Ministerial Sub Committee meets quarterly to discuss all aspects of the DSC programmes including progress, planning and financial matters. **(Oral Question)**

[Back to Top](#)

## **Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services**

**Ms Michaela Boyle (Sinn Féin – West Tyrone)** - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he plans to increase the funding allocated to Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

**Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety):** There are no immediate plans to increase the funding allocated to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Investment in CAMHS has increased from £9.5m in 2006 to £19.4m in 2014. This includes additional investment of just over £2m within the last two years. **(Oral Question)**

[Back to Top](#)

## **Child Sexual Exploitation**

**Mr Mickey Brady (Sinn Fein – Newry and Armagh)** - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the implementation of the recommendations contained in Professor Kathleen Marshall's report into Child Sexual Exploitation.

**Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety):** As announced in the Assembly on 18 November 2014, I am in the process of establishing a Health and Social Care CSE Response Team to consider all of Professor Marshall's recommendations relevant to the HSC. The Response Team will undertake this work in two phases. In Phase 1, it will consider all of the recommendations made for the HSC and advise me by end January 2015 on whether they should be accepted. In Phase 2 we will move to implementation in accordance with an agreed implementation plan, which will identify who will lead on each recommendation and timescales for completion. The implementation plan will be agreed and published by end March 2015. The HSC Response Team will report progress to me on a 6-monthly basis.

Finally, we are in the process of establishing a mechanism to achieve a cross-departmental co-ordinated response to the Marshall report. I have written to the Ministers of Justice and Education to seek their support. **(Oral Question)**

[Back to Top](#)

## Department of Justice

### Issue of Young Shooters

**Mr Robin Swann (UUP – North Antrim)** - To ask the Minister of Justice for an update on the issue of young shooters, following the meeting between his Department and relevant stakeholders on the 29 September 2014.

**Mr Ford (Minister of Justice):** In the paper I published on 2 July 2014, I proposed that the firearms legislation should be amended to enable someone aged 12 or over to use a shotgun or air rifle for sporting purposes (not vermin or other live quarry) subject to supervision by someone aged 21 or over with three or more years' experience. The responses to this proposal continued to show differing opinions. These were published on the Department's website.

The meeting on the 29th September demonstrated that there remains a gulf between my proposal and the view of some, who are pressing for no, or a lower, age restriction and for no limit on the purposes for which the firearms may be used by a young person.

Officials undertook to consider the various views expressed including the possible introduction of a system of approved clay pigeon clubs. Officials will shortly commence discussions with those who attended the workshop. **(9<sup>th</sup> December)**

[Back to Top](#)

### Teaching Staff at Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre

**Mr Peter Weir (DUP – North Down)** - To ask the Minister of Justice what access to, or provision of, educational courses or professional development is available to teaching staff at Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre, Bangor.

**Mr Ford (Minister of Justice):** Teachers and Instructors at Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre have access to a range of educational courses. However, they do not have access to the full range of professional development opportunities provided by local Education & Library Boards to their counterparts within mainstream education. This issue is under consideration by officials as part of the ongoing review of Education within Woodlands. **(9<sup>th</sup> December)**

[Back to Top](#)

## **Teaching Staff at Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre**

**Mr Peter Weir (DUP – North Down)** - To ask the Minister of Justice what consideration has been given to transferring responsibility for teaching staff at Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre, Bangor to the Department of Education.

**Mr Ford (Minister of Justice):** The Minister of Education and I have established a cross-Departmental Working Group, tasked with examining current arrangements for the provision of Education within Woodlands and bringing forward proposals for making appropriate connections to mainstream and other specialist Education and Training services. As the age range of young people in Woodlands extends beyond compulsory school age, the Department for Employment and Learning have also participated in the Review.

The Working Group has met on a number of occasions and my Department will continue to engage with DEL and DE, as appropriate, pending formal receipt of the Working Group's proposals. **(9<sup>th</sup> December)**

[Back to Top](#)