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Office of First and Deputy First Minister

Delivering Social Change Signature Programmes

Ms Claire Sugden (IND – East Londonderry) - To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister how the six Delivering Social Change Signature Programmes are addressing the needs of young people who are engaged in cycles of anti-social behaviour.

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Delivering Social Change is about creating a new culture and focus on cross-cutting work to achieve social benefits that deliver a sustained reduction in poverty and associated issues across all ages. Within the programme there is a particular focus on improving children and young people's health, well being and life opportunities, and breaking the long-term cycle of multi-generational problems.

The initial six Delivering Social Change Signature Programmes are part of this process, and their social benefits are multi-faceted. All of these Signature Programmes will inevitably either help prevent, or address head on, anti-social behaviours in children and young people, and their families.

A range of holistic interventions are being provided under these Signature Programmes to encourage re-engagement in education, training or employment and enhance prospects to become full participants in society. These include a series of mentoring, counselling and psycho-education support for those children, young people and families directly experiencing anti-social behaviours. **(3rd February)** [Back to Top](#)

Summer Camps Pilot Programme

Mr Trevor Lunn (APNI – Lagan Valley) - To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Summer Camps Pilot Programme envisaged in Together: Building a United Community.

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Work is progressing to design and implement a pilot programme of 100 summer schools/camps in the summer of 2015. Four co-design workshops with stakeholders and four youth engagement sessions were held in December and early January. The feedback from these events will inform the final design of the summer schools/camps programme for implementation in the summer of 2015.

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Together: Building a United Community Spend

Mr Chris Lyttle (APNI – East Belfast) - To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister how the £10m allocated for Together: Building a United Community by the Budget 2015/16 will be spent.

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Department is presently assessing the resourcing requirements across the seven headline actions and other commitments to ensure that it makes most effective use of the resources available and maximises good relations outcomes. **(6th February)**

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Victims of Clerical Abuse

Dr Alasdair McDonnell (SDLP – South Belfast) - To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister what form of inquiry will be established for victims of clerical abuse, not covered by the current Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry process chaired by Justice Hart.

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We are currently giving careful consideration to an options paper provided by officials in relation to child clerical abuse that falls outside the scope of the Inquiry into Historical Institutional Abuse.

We are mindful of the destructive impact clerical abuse has had on many individuals and we are giving much thought to the likely needs of victims and survivors, particularly in terms of emotional and other support.

Ultimately it will be for the Executive to consider how to deal with clerical abuse that does not fall within the Inquiry's terms of reference.

Anyone whose experiences fall outside the scope of the current Inquiry is encouraged to report this to the PSNI and Social Services for investigation. Where appropriate, the alleged perpetrators can then be brought before the courts. This is the primary means by which victims and survivors can seek justice for what happened to them. **(6th February)**

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Department of Education

Classroom Assistants

Miss Michelle McIlveen (DUP – Strangford) - To ask the Minister of Education to outline the number of classroom assistants and their associated costs provided by each Education and Library Board to assist statemented children in mainstream schools.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): The number (headcount) of classroom assistants and their associated costs provided by each Education and Library Board to assist statemented children in mainstream schools is as follows:

Education and Library Board	Number	Costs
BELB	877*	£8,911,000
WELB	980	£12,046,000
NEELB	1176	£9,491,002
SEELB	1057	£9,117,106
SELB	1361	£8,683,562

*at December 2014

The figures shown above, with the exception of BELB, represent the number of Special Educational Needs (SEN) Classroom Assistants as at 15 January 2015, but these can fluctuate during the year.

The costs shown above are for 2013/14 and include employers' National Insurance and Pension Contribution costs. **(2nd February)**

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After-School Programmes

Mr Danny Kinahan (UUP – South Antrim) - To ask the Minister of Education how many after-school programmes supporting primary school children with special needs receive recognition, funding or support from his Department or Belfast Education and Library Board.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): The Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) has advised that, with the exception of summer schemes, it does not fund any after-school programmes for pupils with special educational needs (SEN).

BELB’s Autistic Spectrum Disorder service, however, provides after-school social skills programmes for primary pupils prior to transfer and, in collaboration with its youth service, a number of classroom assistants are involved in board managed youth schemes during holiday periods to enable participation of SEN pupils.

My Department’s Extended Schools (ES) programme provides additional resources to those schools which serve children and young people from areas of disadvantage by providing additional learning opportunities, including after-school provision. There are currently 65 primary schools in the BELB area that qualify for ES funding and programmes implemented will facilitate all children including those with SEN. **(3rd February)**

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Maintenance Budget for Schools

Mr Gordon Dunne (DUP – North Down) - To ask the Minister of Education, in light of the reduced maintenance budget, what assurances he can give that children will continue to be taught in schools that are safe and fit for purpose.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): The safety of children whilst in school is of the uttermost importance and I am fully committed to ensuring that schools are both safe and fit for the purpose for which they were built. To this end, and within tight budget constraints, I allocated £17m to maintenance at the start of the 2014-15 financial year and was successful in obtaining a further £5m as the result of a successful bid submitted in the in year June monitoring round. A significant element of the increased capital allocation for minor works in 2014/15 was also applied to projects. This will assist in reducing the maintenance backlog and in addressing health and safety issues. **(3rd February)**

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Classroom Assistants

Ms Claire Sugden (IND – East Londonderry) - To ask the Minister of Education for his assessment of the provision of classroom assistants in mainstream post-primary schools for pupils who have a disability that were supported by a classroom assistant at primary level.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): As outlined in the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs, Education and Library Boards (ELBs) are required to review all statements of special educational needs (SEN) at least annually and these reviews should be seen as part of a process of continuous assessment. A child’s transfer from primary to post-primary education is carefully considered during the last year in the child’s current school and the annual review of the child’s SEN, which if necessary should be brought forward to allow sufficient time, will review the provision being made including, if appropriate, provision of a classroom assistant.

The review process enables an ELB to consider the individual needs of a child and how they may change in a post-primary setting. If it is concluded that a child continues to need the support of a classroom assistant the statement will be subsequently amended and the provision put in place in the new school setting. **(3rd February)**

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New Education Authority

Miss Michelle McIlveen (DUP – Strangford) - To ask the Minister of Education who will have responsibility for the development of an appropriate management structure for the new Education Authority.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): My Department is currently developing a management structure for the Education Authority (EA) in consultation with the Interim Chief Executive. This includes the identification of posts at a senior level and will ensure that senior managers are in post as soon as possible after the Authority becomes operational. My Department will ask the Board of the Authority to review the management structure after an interval of no more than five years. **(3rd February)**

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Education Authority Implementation Team

Miss Michelle McIlveen (DUP – Strangford) - To ask the Minister of Education when he anticipates that the Education Authority Implementation Team will complete its work and provide a timescale for its dissolution.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): The Education Authority Implementation Team (EAIT) is currently implementing the change programme to establish the Education Authority (EA). This is a significant programme of work which will continue beyond 1 April 2015.

Responsibility for managing the change programme will pass to EA on 1 April 2015.
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Transition Planning and Reviewing Arrangements Post-Primary

Ms Claire Sugden (IND – East Londonderry) - To ask the Minister of Education what transition planning and reviewing arrangements currently exist for young people with a disability, once they have left post-primary compulsory education.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): Once young people have left post-primary education, the responsibility for their transition arrangements no longer falls to the Department of Education. (3rd February)

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Teacher and Classroom Assistant Training

Mr George Robinson (DUP – East Londonderry) - To ask the Minister of Education how his Department ensures teachers and classroom assistants are trained to manage pupils with epilepsy.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): The Education and Library Boards (ELBs) undertake a needs analysis, on an annual basis, of the training required by schools for the forthcoming academic year.

School principals are responsible for determining the training needs of their teachers and school staff and they can avail of the wide range of courses on all aspects of special educational needs, including epilepsy, through the ELBs.

Training with regard to health conditions, including epilepsy, would be provided by the relevant Health and Social Care Trust and will be in line with the pupil's individual healthcare plan and be subject to on-going review. **(3rd February)**

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Delivering Social Change Signature Programme

Mr Gregory Campbell (DUP – East Londonderry) - To ask the Minister of Education, following the details of the 2015-16 Budget, whether he will provide an update on the continuation of the Delivering Social Change Signature Programme which is due to conclude in 2015.

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): The Delivering Social Change improving Literacy and Numeracy Signature Programme is a two year programme planned to finish at the end of June 2015. The future of the programme is under consideration in the context of a severely constrained financial climate. **(4th February)**

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Department of Health

Eating Disorder Services

Mr Chris Hazzard (Sinn Féin – South Down) - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) what eating disorder services are currently offered to patients; (ii) whether he has any plans to merge all eating disorder services within a single regional unit; and (iii) whether he would consider the Downshire site in Downpatrick as a potential location for a single eating disorder unit.

Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety): Eating Disorder Services are provided through a stepped care approach which ranges from early detection and intervention, to community-based treatment, to specialist inpatient provision. Community-based Specialist Eating Disorder Services are available across all five HSC Trusts (with Belfast Trust providing services for the South Eastern Trust) for both adults and children and young people.

Inpatient treatment for adults with an eating disorder is facilitated in existing hospitals with in-reach support provided by specialist community-based eating disorder teams. This ensures a continuum of care when patients are discharged.

Inpatient care for children and adolescents with eating disorders is usually provided at Beechcroft, the Regional Child and Adolescent Mental Health Inpatient Unit. If the patient's condition is primarily physical, clinicians may decide that the best place for treatment is an acute hospital setting.

If a patient requires more intense specialist treatment for anorexia, Trusts can access beds in England, Scotland and Ireland through the Extra Contractual Referral (ECR) process.

& (iii) There are currently no plans for a single regional eating disorders unit.

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Adoption Applications

Mr Steven Agnew (GPNI – North Down) - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 40378/11-15, whether his Department does not, or cannot, obtain access to the detail of the dates when the 13 applications for adoption from same-sex couples were received.

Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety): The Health and Social Care Trusts have advised that between December 2013 and December 2014, a total of 10 applications to adopt from same-sex couples have been received. The actual dates on which these applications were received are provided in the table below

Applications from Civil partners	Dates Received	Applications from unmarried same sex couples	Dates Received
4	i) 05/12/13 ii) 06/01/14 iii) 02/04/14 iv) 07/11/14	6	i) 04/12/13 ii) 18/04/14 ii) 14/05/14 iv) 01/06/14 v) 05/06/14 vi) 11/12/14

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Department of Justice

Child Protection Policy

Lord Morrow of Clogher Valley (DUP – Fermanagh and South Tyrone) - To ask the Minister of Justice to provide, or place in the Assembly library, a copy of his Department's child protection policy; and whether this applies to all agencies under his departmental remit.

Mr Ford (Minister of Justice): The Department of Justice, including its Agencies, adheres to the NICS Child Protection policy as laid down in the Northern Ireland Civil Service HR Handbook, Chapter 6.02 "Child Protection".

Please find below the link to the relevant section of the NICS HR Handbook for your information.

- <http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/nics-child-protection-policy.pdf>

The policy makes provision for more specific procedures and guidance to be developed specific to Departmental functions or circumstances.

Both the Youth Justice Agency and the Northern Ireland Prison Service have developed specific Child Protection Policy and Procedures which are consistent with the NICS wide policy but more specific to the needs of their client group and their particular functions.

Please find links to both policies below;

YJA policy:

- http://www.youthjusticeagencyni.gov.uk/document_uploads/Child_Protection_Policy_&_Procedures.pdf

NIPS policy:

- http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/ni-prison-service/nips-publications/policy_reports/safeguarding-children-framework-and-guidance.pdf

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Department of Regional Development

Road Safety Measures

Mr Paul Frew (DUP – North Antrim) - To ask the Minister for Regional Development to detail the road safety measures undertaken by Transport NI over the last three years at Diamond Primary School, Cullybackey to ensure the safety of pupils; and to outline any future plans for improving road safety at the school. **[Priority Written]**

Mr Kennedy (Minister of Regional Development): This school has benefited from the provision of Safe Routes to School signage on Dreen Road since 2006 and the signage was upgraded in 2013.

Currently, the North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB) has approval to carry out works to widen the footpath across the frontage of the school, which are expected to begin in the next few months.

My Department has agreed to investigate the possibility of widening the existing 1.0m hard standing to a 1.8m footpath over a distance of approximately 100m beyond the school boundary towards Cullybackey. **(3rd February)**

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Department of Social Development

Child Support Appeal Tribunals

Mr Jim Allister (TUV – North Antrim) - To ask the Minister for Social Development, whether decisions made by the Child Support Appeal Tribunals on referrals (under Article 28D (1) (b)) under Article 18 and/or Article 19, have the right of appeal under Regulation 22(1)(a) and (b) of the Child Support Order 1991, including whether there are any circumstances where this is not the case; and if so, to provide details.

Mr Storey (Minister for Social Development): Decisions made by an appeal tribunal do not have the right of appeal under Article 22(1) (a) and (b) of the Child Support (Northern Ireland) Order 1991. This is because this Article provides the right to appeal to a tribunal against a decision made by the Child Maintenance Service, as opposed to a decision made by an appeal tribunal.

Article 25 of the Child Support (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 provides the right to appeal the decision of an appeal tribunal to a Child Support Commissioner on a point of law.

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