

NICCY Summary: Written Assembly Questions week ending 4th December, 2015

GFS: Update on responses to consultation.

<p>AQO 9135/11-16</p>	<p>Mr Andy Allen (UUP - East Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on responses to their consultation on proposals to extend age discrimination legislation to the provision of goods, facilities and services.</p> <p>Public consultation on proposals to extend age discrimination legislation to the provision of goods, facilities and services ended on 8 October 2015. A total of 222 written responses were submitted during the consultation period. Of these, 77 were received via the online consultation questionnaire, 49 were hardcopy submissions, mainly from representative organisations, and 96 were from individuals, submitted via the Northern Ireland Youth Forum. Officials are in the process of analysing all of the consultation responses across the different formats. They are bringing together the responses to each of the consultation questions to provide us with an overall picture of the views emerging from the consultation process.</p> <p>When this analysis is completed, and final policy decisions are taken, we will then consider all of the options available to us for bringing this legislation before the Assembly.</p>
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To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on plans to establish a new model for engaging with civic society

<p>AQW 51084/11-16</p>	<p>Ms Claire Sugden (IND - East Londonderry)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on plans to establish a new model for engaging with civic society; including progress on a civic advisory panel as proposed in the Stormont House Agreement.</p> <p>The Stormont House Agreement recognised that it is important that civic voices are heard and civic views are considered in relation to key social, cultural and economic issues. A new engagement model was envisaged, based on the establishment of a compact civic advisory</p>
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		<p>panel.</p> <p>The next steps for the establishment of the panel were set out in the Stormont Agreement and Implementation Plan of 17 November 2015. A panel of six people will be established by the Executive. It will be tasked by the Executive to consider specific strategic issues relevant to the Programme for Government and report to the Executive. It may also propose subjects that it wishes to consider and seek Executive agreement to do so. The panel will seek the views of a wide range of representatives and stakeholders from civic society. Panel members, including the Chair will be identified and appointed by OFMDFM. Agreed terms of reference for the panel were set out at Appendix F7 of the Stormont Agreement and Implementation Plan.</p>
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Update on the Revised Child Poverty Strategy;

<p>AQW 50850/11-16</p>	<p>Ms Claire Sugden (IND - East Londonderry)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Revised Child Poverty Strategy; including, (a) when it will be laid in the Assembly; and (b) published.</p> <p>We refer to our response to you dated 22 October (AQW48692/11-16) on this matter.</p>
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Progress report on Bright Start

<p>AQW 50617/11-16</p>	<p>Mr Steven Agnew (GPNi - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether they intend to publish a progress report on Bright Start; and if so, to provide details on when the report will be published.</p> <p>The first phase of the Executive's Childcare Strategy (A Strategic Framework and Key First Actions) was launched on 25 September 2013. The Framework sets out a direction of travel for the Childcare Strategy and its 15 key first actions are initial steps to getting it there. The draft Childcare Strategy (open for public consultation from 28 July – 13 November 2015) builds on and develops the "Bright Start" themes and priorities. The final Strategy will be subject to a robust monitoring and evaluation framework.</p> <p>The Bright Start school age childcare grant scheme was launched in 2013</p>
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		and a third round of funding will open for applications later this month. An evaluation of the Bright Start grant scheme is planned for early 2016; results of the evaluation will be made public and will be used to inform the design and operation of any future grant schemes to support the Childcare Strategy.
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Discussions with the UK Government around its intention to replace the Human Rights Act 1998 with a UK Bill of Rights.

AQO 8245/11-15	Mr Alastair Ross (DUP - East Antrim)	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister what discussions they have planned with the UK Government around its intention to replace the Human Rights Act 1998 with a UK Bill of Rights.</p> <p>Replacing the Human Rights Act with a British Bill of Rights was a Conservative election manifesto pledge and we are advised that their Ministers intend to make an announcement regarding their plans in due course.</p> <p>Responsibility for the relevant legislation lies with the Ministry of Justice and the Northern Ireland Office.</p> <p>Until announcements on the Government's proposals are made it would be unwise to speculate on the impact any new British Bill of Rights may have on the Department's functions.</p> <p>We will continue to keep a watching brief and as more details emerge on the proposals, we will wish to discuss them.</p>
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Assessment of the Higher Level Apprenticeship pilot projects.

AQO 9231/11-16	Mr Samuel Gardiner MBE (UUP - Upper Bann)	<p>To ask the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the Higher Level Apprenticeship pilot projects.</p> <p>In collaboration with employers throughout Northern Ireland, further education colleges and universities have been working to develop a number of pilot Higher Level Apprenticeships to commence during 2015/16.</p> <p>To date, 31 higher level apprenticeship pilots, across nine occupational areas are being funded. These pilots have the potential to deliver over 400 higher apprenticeships.</p> <p>I am encouraged by the number of pilots that have been developed and the</p>
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		<p>range of occupational areas covered.</p> <p>The Skills Barometer, launched in November, identified that there will be a strong need in our economy for people with intermediate and graduate level skills across a range of sectors in the coming years.</p> <p>Higher Level Apprenticeships will help to meet this demand as well as increasing the general employability of those undertaking them. The Skills Barometer also shows that those who complete a Higher Level Apprenticeship will also greatly increase their earning potential.</p> <p>An evaluation framework for the pilots has been developed in conjunction with relevant sector partnerships and the Strategic Advisory Forum. The evaluation will be ongoing throughout the lifetime of the pilots with regular feedback sought from employers, colleges and universities and the apprentices themselves.</p> <p>The results of the evaluation will help to inform the future development of Higher Level Apprenticeships as the new apprenticeship system is introduced from September 2016 onwards.</p>
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How Further Education Colleges can help address the educational underachievement of boys.

<p>AQO 9225/11- 16</p>	<p>Mr Ian McCrea (DUP - Mid Ulster)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline how Further Education Colleges can help address the educational underachievement of boys.</p> <p>Further Education colleges have a key role in supporting social inclusion by providing those who have low or no qualifications, or who have barriers to learning, with the skills and qualifications needed to find employment and to become economically active.</p> <p>In this regard, colleges are key deliverers of the Training for Success Programme for 16 and 17 year olds, providing 44% of all provision in Northern Ireland. Training for Success guarantees training for up to 104 weeks to enable participants to gain qualifications at level 2 or level 3 with a view to finding employment in a trainees' chosen vocational areas. The programme therefore helps all young people who reach school leaving age without achieving 5 GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and maths to achieve an equivalent qualification. Within colleges 85% of participants on Training for</p>
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		<p>Success are male.</p> <p>My Department is also introducing wide ranging innovative reforms to Northern Ireland's system of professional and technical training, through a new Level 2 Youth Training programme and a new system of apprenticeships at Level 3 and above. The FE Colleges will be central to the success of this new system, working with employers to develop appropriate curriculum and as a key deliverer of off-the-job training for Youth Training and Apprenticeships from Level 3-5.</p> <p>My Department and the Department for Education are taking forward an innovative project to develop and build upon models of delivery of Essential Skills in schools.</p> <p>The overall aim is to address the underachievement in GCSE English and maths - currently 31% of young people leave school without a grade C or above in GCSE English and maths -, to ensure young people develop their English and maths to enable them to progress into work; their chosen career path and to opportunities for further learning.</p>
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Departmental plans or support programmes to assist people not in education, employment or training for three or more years.

<p>AQO 9230/11-16</p>	<p>Mr Pat Ramsey (SDLP - Foyle)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline any departmental plans or support programmes to assist people not in education, employment or training for three or more years.</p> <p>My plans and programmes for addressing the needs of young people who are not in education, employment or training operate within the overall 'Pathways to Success' strategy. This, the Executive's cross-departmental strategy, will guide the direction of our programmes to 2020.</p> <p>A recent independent interim evaluation carried out by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion indicated that our overall policy direction was on track and concluded that Gross Value Added of £61 million was generated by the direct DEL programmes evaluated.</p> <p>With the cessation of funding for NEET programmes under the Economy and Jobs Initiative in March 2015, my Department has continued to support young people in the NEET category through 19 projects under the new European Social Fund Programme.</p>
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		<p>Currently, under Priority 1.2 of the Programme, my Department is funding 13 projects throughout Northern Ireland until 2018.</p> <p>These projects will ensure that young people have ready access to positive learning opportunities that allow them to develop the necessary vocational and life skills to make successful transitions into further and higher education, training, or employment.</p> <p>Under Priority 2.2 of the Programme, my Department is funding 6 projects throughout Northern Ireland until 2018. There are 5 providers covering six geographical areas.</p> <p>These will provide a wraparound family intervention support and employability mentoring service, helping families address the health, social, economic, educational, employment and training issues that impact on their daily lives.</p> <p>The project will support all family members and break the cycle of intergenerational unemployment and associated poverty in communities.</p>
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Food banks

<p>AQW 51437/11-16</p>	<p>Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson (UUP - Upper Bann)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 50248/11-16, to detail to the findings of the research conducted by his Department into the use of food banks.</p> <p>My Department undertook research to better understand why people in Northern Ireland are using food banks working with users of the service as well as food bank providers. A report on the findings of this research, An Insight into Food Banks in Northern Ireland, is available on the Department for Social Development's internet website.</p>
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Minister of Education's assessment of the Delivering Social Change Improving Literacy and Numeracy Signature Programme

<p>AQO 9203/11-16</p>	<p>Mr Michael McGimpsey (UUP - South Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education for his assessment of the Delivering Social Change Improving Literacy and Numeracy Signature Programme in addressing educational underachievement.</p> <p>The Delivering Social Change Literacy and Numeracy Signature Programme (DSC) has had a positive impact on pupils but, any recent</p>
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		<p>improvement in performance has to be looked at in the current school context.</p> <p>The DSC Programme represented a significant investment and was one of a number of programmes and interventions provided in schools to improve literacy and numeracy.</p> <p>In line with the Every School a Good School policy; many schools have from within their own resources been working hard to improve the teaching and learning for pupils particularly in maths and English.</p> <p>The evidence from evaluations carried out by the ETI and Education Authority suggests that the DSC programme has had a positive impact on identifying underperformance, targeting and addressing underachievement.</p> <p>The ETI evaluation of DSC found that “A significant strength of the programme has been the impact it is having on bringing greater cohesion to the other initiatives operating currently in schools to effect overall improvement in the literacy and numeracy standards attained by the pupils”</p> <p>Principals and teachers are to be commended for the way in which they embraced the programme and developed it within their schools. In the most successful schools, the learning has been shared across the curriculum and many principals are already mainstreaming the approaches learnt under DSC within their schools.</p> <p>Undoubtedly the learning they have gained will provide a lasting legacy for those schools. To support this, I have set aside an additional £200,000 this year to provide a legacy programme to disseminate the best practice developed during DSC to all schools.</p>
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Raising awareness among young people in schools about the dangers of legal highs

<p>AQW 51537/11-16</p>	<p>Mr Gary Middleton (DUP - Foyle)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education what steps his Department is taking to work with stakeholders to raise awareness among young people in schools about the dangers of legal highs and to prevent them being brought onto school premises.</p> <p>The “New Strategic Direction” for Alcohol and Drugs (NSD) is the DHSSPS</p>
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		<p>led cross-departmental strategy to tackle the harmful impacts caused by alcohol and drugs addiction. My Department is represented on the NSD Steering Group of stakeholders which oversees the delivery of NSD Phase 2, monitoring and ongoing policy development process of the strategy. My Department also receives drugs information and alerts through the Drugs and Alcohol Management Information System, and these are forwarded to the Education Authority for action as appropriate. Likewise, my Department passes on advice from the Chief Medical Officer as appropriate. It is a statutory requirement for every grant-aided school to have in place a drugs education policy. Drugs education is provided in the curriculum which is taught to all pupils of compulsory school age in grant-aided schools.</p>
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Support provided to both primary and post-primary schools to address bullying

<p>AQW 51536/11-16</p>	<p>Mr Gary Middleton (DUP - Foyle)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail what support his Department provides to both primary and post-primary schools to address bullying.</p> <p>The Department works in partnership with schools and other stakeholders to tackle bullying in a broad, holistic manner.</p> <p>At primary level, as part of the Personal Development and Mutual Understand area of learning, all children are encouraged to develop an awareness and understanding of their own and others' feelings and emotions and of how their actions affect others. They are also taught strategies and skills for keeping themselves healthy and safe.</p> <p>At post-primary level, the Learning for Life and Work area of learning teaches young people to develop strategies to promote personal safety including learning about different forms of bullying. At Key Stage 4 this includes understanding of how pupils can maximise and sustain their own health and well-being.</p> <p>The Department has produced guidance for schools in developing effective anti-bullying policies <u>which includes</u> practical initiatives and case studies to support schools to tackle bullying. The guidance "Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour" is available on the Department's website at http://www.deni.gov.uk/ppbehaviour-4.pdf. The effectiveness of a school's anti-bullying measures is monitored through the regular cycle of school inspections.</p>
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		<p>My Department funds the local Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF), a grouping which brings together over 25 statutory and non-statutory organisations involved in tackling all forms of bullying. The Forum delivers awareness raising activities, such as the annual Anti-Bullying Week (ABW) and provides practical support, resources and guidance to schools, parents and pupils. In 2013 it released its own resource pack for schools “Effective responses to Bullying Behaviour” which highlighted best-practice and suggested a number of approaches which schools could use in responding to bullying incidents. The Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) has been accessible to young people of postprimary age in mainstream schools since September 2007 and to postprimary aged pupils in special schools from January 2011. This allows pupils to speak to a trained counsellor about their concerns or fears around bullying.</p> <p>The Department’s “iMatter” Programme is intended to support the entire school community to be engaged in promoting resilient emotional health for all pupils. Under the programme a suite of homework diary inserts and posters on topics of concern to young people such as self esteem and coping with stress, worry, anxiety and bullying, and outlining sources of help are prepared and distributed annually.</p> <p>Building on this, I introduced the “Addressing Bullying in Schools Bill” to the Assembly on 30 November 2015. This will provide a single definition of bullying and require grant-aided schools to record all bullying incidents. It will also increase the direct responsibility of each Board of Governors for the school’s anti-bullying policies and procedures; and for ensuring the effectiveness of those systems is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. I believe these measures will encourage all schools to bring additional effort and focus to tackling this problem, will promote the more widespread adoption of best-practice in this area and will enhance the consistency with which all schools seek to address bullying.</p>
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What actions are being taken to address the regional disparity in educational provision for deaf children.

<p>AQW 51512/11-16</p>	<p>Mr Peter Weir (DUP -</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education what actions are being taken to address the regional disparity in educational provision for deaf children.</p>
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	<p><i>North Down)</i></p>	<p>The Education Authority (EA) has recently commenced a review of support services for children with a range of identified needs. This initial analysis includes services for hearing impairment. This will provide initial information on the staffing profile in each of the five sub-regions to assist with future planning and to begin to redress any inconsistencies in service delivery or provision that may emerge. This information is likely to be shared with the EA members in early 2016, with recommendations, as appropriate.</p>
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Sex offences committed in school premises

<p>AQW 51473/11- 16</p>	<p>Mr Ross Hussey (UUP - West Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 48786/11-16, (i) for an update on the meetings between departmental officials and the PSNI; and (ii) to detail any new strategy in relation to reports of sex offences, alleged cases of rape and physical sexual assaults committed in school premises</p> <p>Department officials recently met with the PSNI and agreed a number of measures to ensure improved cooperation and communication including agreement that the PSNI will inform the Education Authority (EA) when a school reports a sexual offence to Social Services or PSNI. The EA and PSNI will maintain their liaison through the Safeguarding Board (SBNI). As you know, the objective of the SBNI is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people by coordinating the work and ensuring the effectiveness of each person or body represented on the Board. Both the EA and PSNI are members of the SBNI.</p> <p>A PSNI officer has been invited to attend the next meeting of the Designated Officers of Child Protection in Education (DOCPEG). The Department will consider what further advice could be issued to schools on foot of this.</p>
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Number of pupils entitled to free school meals and that left school without achieving five or more GCSEs

<p>AQW 51435/11- 16</p>	<p>Mr Steven Agnew (GPNi -</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail the number of pupils entitled to free school meals and that left school without achieving five or more GCSEs including English and Maths, broken down by (a) Maintained; (b) Controlled; (c) Integrated; (d) Irish-medium; and (e) gender.</p>
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	<p><i>North Down)</i></p>	<p>The answer can be found in the following table.</p> <p>The number of pupils entitled to free school meals leaving school without achieving 5 or more GCSEs including English and Maths, 2013/14</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="563 577 1396 1211"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Number</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>(a) Maintained</td> <td>1,366</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(b) Controlled</td> <td>875</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(c) Integrated</td> <td>349</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(d) Irish-medium</td> <td>21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(e) Gender - boys</td> <td>1,521</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(e) Gender - girls</td> <td>1,120</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Source: School Leavers Survey</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintained includes both Catholic and Other Maintained. 2. Integrated includes both Controlled Integrated and Grant Maintained Integrated. 3. Irish Medium is not a separate management type and includes pupils from different management types; these pupils will appear twice in the above table. 		Number	(a) Maintained	1,366	(b) Controlled	875	(c) Integrated	349	(d) Irish-medium	21	(e) Gender - boys	1,521	(e) Gender - girls	1,120
	Number															
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Shared Education: Consultation with the pupils of the five individual schools moving to the Lisanelly site.

<p>AQW 51433/11- 16</p>	<p>Mr Steven Agnew (GPN) - <i>North Down)</i></p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education whether he will publish the consultation completed with the pupils of the five individual schools moving to the Lisanelly site.</p> <p>The Department has recently carried out significant informal engagement with local stakeholders to develop an overarching brand for the Strule Shared Education Campus. As part of that work, discussions were held with a wide</p>
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		<p>range of groups and individuals, including pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff, Boards of Governors, school managing authorities, community representatives and the general public.</p> <p>As this was not a formal consultation process but an aspect of the ongoing discussions throughout the project, a consultation report has not been prepared. I am pleased, however, to advise that there is widespread local support for the Programme and broad agreement on the new name, the Strule Shared Education Campus Omagh, which I announced at an event on 21 October.</p> <p>Further information about the Strule Programme is available on the new website at www.strule.org, which reflects the new branding.</p>
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Pupils with hearing impairments

<p>AQW 51403/11-16</p>	<p>Mr Peter Weir (DUP - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education what plans he has to review the number of teachers for deaf pupils.</p> <p>The Department is not the employer of teachers, and is not responsible for the appointment of teachers. Teachers are employed by the Board of Governors (BoG) for each school setting, and appointments are carried out in conjunction with the relevant employing authority; such as the Education Authority (EA) and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) or in the case of Voluntary Grammar and Grant Maintained Integrated schools by individual BoGs.</p> <p>The EA has responsibility for special needs provision for all schools and have recently commenced a review of support services for children with a range of identified needs. This initial analysis includes services for hearing impairment. This will provide information on the staffing profile in each of the five sub-regions to assist with future planning and to begin to redress any inconsistencies in service delivery or provision that may emerge. This information is likely to be shared with the EA members in early 2016, with recommendations, as appropriate.</p>
<p>AQW 51402/11-16</p>	<p>Mr Peter Weir (DUP -</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education why one to one educational support is not available for deaf children unlike other jurisdictions.</p>

	<p><i>North Down)</i></p>	<p>The Education Authority (EA) provides a comprehensive level of support to help deaf children achieve to their full potential, tailored to the individual needs of each child.</p> <p>Support is available from the Qualified Teachers of the Deaf in the EA's specialist peripatetic services for the hearing impaired. Special schools are also an integral part of the education system, with Jordanstown School specialising in education for children who are hearing (or visually) impaired. The EA also provide appropriate specialist equipment and, where deemed necessary, a designated level of classroom assistant support to meet the needs of individual pupils.</p>
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<p>AQW 51401/11- 16</p>	<p>Mr Peter Weir (DUP - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail who inspects the quality of the specialist services available to children with special educational needs.</p> <p>The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) evaluates the quality of education provision for children with special educational needs in special schools, mainstream schools and specialist provision.</p> <p>The ETI does not inspect the quality of specialist health interventions, such as the work of speech and language therapists.</p> <p>The ETI has evaluated specialist services such as Middletown Centre for Autism (with DES) in 2012.</p> <p>An evaluation of pupil behaviour in schools and other educational settings was carried out by ETI in 2010 across mainstream and special schools</p> <p>Previously, surveys have been carried out by ETI, including one evaluating the work of Music Therapists in special schools over the 2004-2006 period.</p>
<p>AQW 51399/11- 16</p>	<p>Mr Peter Weir (DUP - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education what action his Department is taking to ensure parents are aware of the support available under a Special Educational Needs statement.</p> <p>Under legislation, the Education Authority (EA) has a duty to arrange for the parent of any child with special educational needs (SEN) to be provided with advice and information about matters relating to those needs.</p> <p>The Department provides funding for the EA's Advice and Information Service.</p>

		<p>This Service is to ensure that parents of children at all Stages of the Code of Practice, including those with a Statement, know where and how to access information and advice in relation to the needs of their children so they can make appropriate and informed choices and decisions.</p> <p>When issuing a proposed Statement, parents are informed by the EA that they may seek advice from the Advice and Information Service or make use of the Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service, which is also funded by the Department. Contact details for these services are provided, as are those of the named officer in the EA who is available to answer queries parents may have in regard to the statementing process or about the statement itself.</p> <p>In addition, the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of SEN and the Supplement to the Code recognise the importance of schools and the EA working in partnership with the parents of a child with SEN. Both documents provide guidance on arrangements for informing parents about the support available within the school and the EA.</p>
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Addressing domestic violence

<p>AQW 51370/11-16</p>	<p>Ms Bronwyn McGahan (SF - Fermanagh and South Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education what percentage of his Department's budget is spent on addressing domestic violence or on the delivery of the Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy 2013-2020.</p> <p>It is not possible for my Department to estimate the percentage of costs required to currently address domestic violence which contributes to the new Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy however I can provide an overview of our approach.</p> <p>While there are no resources within the curriculum focusing specifically on domestic violence, a range of teaching resources and guidance for all year groups in relation to the associated Areas of Learning is available from the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment's website and has been circulated in hard copy to schools. My Department has also recently issued updated Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance, partly in response to the draft <i>Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland Strategy</i>. The Department's iMatter programme is the overarching vehicle for</p>
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		<p>promoting pupils' emotional health and wellbeing and there are a number of areas within this that provide support to children and young people experiencing domestic violence:</p> <p>iMatter resources produced for schools include the subject of 'Family Problems' which covers domestic violence. These resources include posters, leaflets and diary inserts.</p> <p>My Department funds the Women's Aid 'Helping Hands' teacher training programme which was specifically developed in response to an identified need to share understanding and best practice in order to provide support and protection for primary aged children affected by domestic violence.</p> <p>My Department has also commissioned NSPCC to undertake a 'Preventative Education' project which aims to build the capacity of staff in primary schools (including special schools) to build the capacity of school staff to deliver effective preventative education addressing such sensitive issues as domestic violence. The project is currently at the development stage and will be piloted in primary and special schools throughout NI before further roll out.</p>
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Youth Council for Northern Ireland

<p>AQW 51231/11- 16</p>	<p>Ms Claire Sugden (IND - East Londonderry)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education for his assessment of (i) the Youth Council for Northern Ireland's contribution to the youth sector, (ii) the future of the Youth Council for Northern Ireland; and (iii) the evolving role of the Youth Council for Northern Ireland since it was formed.</p> <p>Since it was established in 1990, the Youth Council has performed a range of statutory functions to support regional voluntary youth organisations as set out in the Youth Service (NI) Order 1989. These have included:</p> <p>Advising the Department, Education and Library Boards (the Education Authority) and other bodies on the development of the youth service;</p> <p>To encourage cross-community activity by the youth service;</p> <p>To encourage the provision of facilities for the youth service and facilities which are especially beneficial to young persons; and</p>
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		<p>To encourage and assist the coordination and efficient use of the resources of the youth service.</p> <p>The Youth Council has discharged its duties in a professional and effective manner throughout its 25 years and I acknowledge the dedication of its staff and Board, who have contributed greatly to the development of a vibrant and robust regional youth service who provide support to local youth groups.</p> <p>As you will be aware, I am currently considering the responses to the recent public consultation held on the future of the Youth Council and I will be announcing my decision on the way forward shortly.</p>
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Funding for the Youth Service

AQW 51228/11-16	<p>Ms Claire Sugden (IND - East Londonderry)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education whether (i) funding for the youth service is ring fenced; and if so, (ii) he has plans to maintain this protection.</p> <p>Funding to the Education Authority for youth services during 2015-16 has been protected. A separate budget exists for the Youth Council. Departmental budgets beyond 2015-16 are not yet available, but it is known that the outlook will continue to be challenging for public sector financing. Therefore, I cannot confirm at this stage if I will be in a position to maintain the current protection in place for the Education Authority's youth service budget beyond 2015-16.</p>
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Children with severe learning difficulties not being educated in severe learning disability schools.

AQW 5121 1/11-16	<p>Mr Jim Allister (TU V - North)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education how many children with statements confirming their severe learning difficulties classification are not being educated in severe learning disability schools.</p> <p>In 2014/15, out of 1,484 pupils that have a statement of special educational needs and whose primary need is severe learning difficulties, 159 are educated in a school that is not classified as a "severe learning difficulties" or "severe learning difficulties / mild learning difficulties" special school.</p>
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<p><i>Antrim</i>)</p>	<p>Support for pupils with special educational needs is tailored to the individual needs of the child and a child with SEN and a statement can be educated in a special school or a mainstream school.</p> <p>Source: NI school census</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Figures relate to the 2014/15 academic year. While the 2015/16 school census took place on the 9th October this year, provisional figures will not be available until December 2015 and will not be finalised figures until February 2016.</p> <p>Figures include pupils at stage 5 on the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice that have “severe learning difficulties” listed as their primary special educational needs.</p> <p>Classification of special school types can be found here: https://www.deni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/Review%20of%20Special%20School%20Provision%20in%20Northern%20Ireland%282%29.pdf. Please note that as Belmont and Foyleview special schools have amalgamated since, any pupils attending the new Ardnashee special school have been counted as attending an SLD/MLD special school.</p> <p>Figures include pupils enrolled in primary (nursery units, reception and year 1 – 7 classes), post primary and special schools.</p>
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Department of Education and the PfG

<p>AQW 50445/11-16</p>	<p>Mr David McNarry (UKIP - Strangford)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education how the Programme for Government 2011-16 could be reviewed and modified to better facilitate his Department.</p> <p>A review of the implementation of the current Programme for Government (PfG) is being undertaken by OFMdfM to identify opportunities to support more effective delivery.</p> <p>A number of lessons have been learned in relation to the structure, administration and governance of the PfG that have fed into the review process and will ultimately inform the preparation of future PfGs.</p> <p>The Stormont House Agreement requires the parties that will form the next Executive to resolve the PfG before Ministers are appointed.</p> <p>This constrains the time available for development work following the next election. For this reason, to the extent possible, preparatory work is in hand now to review the implementation of the current Programme, and to</p>
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		<p>position us to secure early agreement on a way forward.</p> <p>It will be important that the processes that lead to the development of the next PfG are responsive to a number of critical influencing factors including: the aspirations of people; the financial position; achievement of wellbeing; new structures and powers in local government; and being capable of implementation.</p>
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Assistance to statutory agencies that may go over budget due to a lack of staff applying for the voluntary redundancy scheme.

<p>AQW 51749/11-16</p>	<p>Mr Steven Agnew (GPNi - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Finance and Personnel what assistance can be given to statutory agencies that may go over budget due to a lack of staff applying for the voluntary redundancy scheme.</p> <p>It is for departments and their arm's length bodies to manage within agreed budget allocations, taking account of robust assumptions around the impact of the voluntary exit scheme.</p> <p>The Executive's In-year monitoring process provides an opportunity for departments to bid for any inescapable pressures arising during the course of the year that cannot be managed internally.</p>
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Family Fund

<p>AQW 51215/11-16</p>	<p>Mr Roy Beggs (UUP - East Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the number of applications received; (ii) how much was awarded and distributed by the Family Fund in each of the last three years; and (iii) how much funding will be available in the 2016-2017 financial year.</p> <p>(i & ii) The data in the table below was provided by the Family Fund (FF) who administer and process grant applications.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Applications Received</th> <th>Awarded by DHSSPS</th> <th>Distributed by FF*</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2012/2013</td> <td>3,720</td> <td>1,576,212</td> <td>1,683,444</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Applications Received	Awarded by DHSSPS	Distributed by FF*	2012/2013	3,720	1,576,212	1,683,444
Year	Applications Received	Awarded by DHSSPS	Distributed by FF*							
2012/2013	3,720	1,576,212	1,683,444							

		2013/2014	3,053	1,576,212	1,693,631
		2014/2015	4,479	1,572,106	1,679,593

* The amount distributed by FF is higher than the amount provided by the Department as the Family Fund realises additional income by using a range of suppliers to fulfil its grant support and this ensures that discounts and rebates from suppliers can be utilised as grant income to support more families.

(iii) It is not possible at this stage to advise on the funding allocation for the FF for 2016/17 as the budget has not been agreed.

Early Intervention Transformation Programmes

<p>AQW 50753/11-16</p>	<p>Ms Claire Sugden (IND - East Londonderry)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on (i) dementia; and (ii) early intervention transformation programmes under the Delivering Social Change initiative.</p> <p>Progress is being made across each of the work streams in the Delivering Social Change Dementia initiative. Scoping exercises have now been completed for all of the work streams including: awareness raising , information and support; training of staff; and short breaks respite and support to carers; and the recruitment of ten dementia navigators is underway.</p> <p>The Early Intervention Transformation Programme continues to make good progress as its workstreams are well established and a number of projects are now delivering services to embed early intervention approaches for the purpose of improving the lives of children in Northern Ireland.</p>
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Families Matter Strategy update

<p>AQW 50734/11-16</p>	<p>Mr Chris Lyttle (APNI - East Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the Families Matter Strategy.</p> <p>The Families Matter strategy emphasised the need to prioritise early intervention and prevention services to support parents and families in</p>
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		<p>Northern Ireland. The strategy acts as a framework for delivery of family support services and focuses on joint and partnership working at strategic and operational levels. My Department allocated £2.8m funding to deliver services in support of the aims and objectives of Families Matter under four themes: information for parents and service planners; access to services; supporting families and parents; and working together for families and communities. Key developments under implementation of the strategy include: the creation of a family support website, which receives up to 30,000 hits per month; and the development of a network of 27 Family Support Hubs across Northern Ireland. The Early Intervention Transformation Programme, which is led by my Department and supported by five other government departments, is also delivering the early intervention aims of Families Matter.</p>
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Support to suicide prevention groups specifically targeted at 17-18 year olds within South Down

<p>AQW 50639/11-16</p>	<p>Mr Seán Rogers (SDLP - South Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail what support his Department is giving to suicide prevention groups specifically targeted at 17-18 year olds within South Down.</p> <p>In 2015/16 the Public Health Agency provided funding of £70k to MACS for mentoring and one to one support for young people aged 16-25. £20k was also provided to Start 360 for mentoring support for 20 young people aged 11-25 who are at risk of suicide and self harm. A range of further suicide prevention services in the South Down area are open to all age groups.</p>
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Spending on mental health provision

<p>AQW 50609/11-16</p>	<p>Mr Samuel Gardiner MBE (UUP - Upper Bann)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail how much has been spent on mental health provision in each of the last ten years.</p> <p>Expenditure by the Health and Social Care Trusts in the Mental Health Programme of Care in the last ten years available was:</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td style="width: 150px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;">£m</td> </tr> </table>		£m
	£m			

		2004/05	169.4
		2005/06	178.9
		2006/07	187.2
		2007/08	195.7
		2008/09	221.4
		2009/10	224.3
		2010/11	228.0
		2011/12	227.5
		2012/13	229.8
		2013/14	233.8

Source Trust Financial Returns. Excludes primary care and any investments made directly by PHA and HSCB.