

NICCY Summary: Written Assembly Questions weeks ending 28 October and 4 November 2016

Impact of Together: Building a United Community on young people

<p>AQO 470/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Gordon Dunne (DUP - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their assessment of the impact Together: Building a United Community has on the young people involved in its programmes.</p> <p>The Together: Building a United Community Strategy is aimed at having a positive impact for all across our society. Children and Young People are a key priority within the Strategy and as such a number of the headline actions focus specifically on improving the opportunities and life experiences for them.</p> <p>The Summer Camps program was the first headline action to be successfully completed with 101 camps, involving 4,200 young people, delivered in 2015/16. The evaluation was very positive and encouraging, highlighting positive attitudinal change in young people towards people from different backgrounds; participants were also able to talk openly about their culture and to take part in other cross community activities.</p> <p>The Cross Community Sports Programme, which took place in Village and Lower Falls area in 15/16, has had a positive impact. The programme aimed at developing young leaders, and participants used sport to break down divisions in society and deliver a programme to tackle sectarianism, racism and improve good relations.</p> <p>The initial phase of the United Youth Programme, involving over 300 young people, concluded on 31 March 2016. An evaluation has been completed and findings have been very positive, with the programme deemed effective in terms of design, administrative and financial control systems, and learning and</p>
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		<p>development outcomes for the participants.</p> <p>We have engaged with young people in the development of these programmes and in September the T:BUC Engagement forum focused on Children and young people and how they can help shape future delivery.</p> <p>Junior Minister Ross and Junior Minister Fearon, have had the opportunity to visit some of these programmes and it is clear both from the evaluations and the feedback from all involved that they are making a real difference. We look forward to their continued development and hearing the views of young people as they progress through the various programmes.</p>
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Update on Links in Achievement and Deprivation Report

<p>AQW 5206/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Chris Lyttle (APNI - East Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail (i) the costs of the Investigating Links in Achievement and Deprivation report; (ii) when it will be published; and (iii) why it has not been published to date.</p> <p>This project entitled ‘Understanding differential educational achievement within and between areas of multiple deprivation in NI – a case study approach’ is being carried out by Professor Ruth Leitch, Professor Joanne Hughes, supported by Dr Ian Shuttleworth and Dr Michael Levers.</p> <p>The overall cost of the contract for this project was £290,563. The study has been running since 2012 and has involved a wide range of in-depth case studies in local areas to develop a better insight into the factors contributing to educational achievement and associated barriers.</p> <p>Officials are currently working with Professor RuthLeitch and her team to finalise the report for publication.</p>
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Impact of Brexit on children

<p>AQW 4874/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Steven Agnew (GPNI - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their assessment on how the United Kingdom exiting the European Union will impact on children, with specific reference to any protections enshrined in EU law that are not currently transposed into UK and Northern Ireland legislation.</p> <p>On the 2 October Prime Minister Theresa May announced that she intended to introduce an EU Repeal Act that will transpose all existing EU law into UK law at the point of exit. It will then be a matter for the UK Parliament and the local Assembly as to which elements are retained, amended or repealed. How the process will work in practice and the full implications of the Act will only become clear when the Bill is published, which is anticipated to be in the next Parliamentary Session.</p>
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DfC progress on Children's Services Co-operation Act

<p>AQW 5388/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Steven Agnew (GPNI - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Communities what arrangements have been made in his Department to promote co-operation, as required by Section 2(2) of the Children's Services Co-operation Act.</p> <p>A senior official within my Department has been formally designated as the Departmental Children's Champion. They are already working alongside colleagues in the Department of Education to support them in drafting the new Children and Young People Strategy and will represent my Department in meetings with other Departmental children's representatives to ensure the needs of Children and Young People are considered as required by the Children's Services Co-Operation Act.</p>
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ALBs and Voluntary Exit Scheme update

<p>AQW 5243/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Philip Smith (UUP - Strangford)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Communities (i) to detail the number of departmental and arm's-length body staff that exited under the Voluntary Exit Scheme, broken down by grade; (ii) how many of these posts were then suppressed; and (iii) (a) what proportion; and (b) how many posts were later (1) advertised; and (2) filled by internal promotion.</p> <p>There have been a number of Voluntary Exit Schemes funded by the Public Sector Transformation Fund which was set up as part of the Stormont House Agreement. In relation to Departmental staff, the relevant scheme was the Northern Ireland Civil Service Voluntary Exit Scheme. This operated in the 2015/16 financial year only for the 12 Northern Ireland Civil Service departments in place at that time. As the Department for Communities only came into existence on 9 May 2016 and comprises elements of 5 different former Departments, it is not possible to answer this question in relation to Department for Communities staff. Information in relation to the numbers and grades of staff exiting from the former Departments can be found on the NICS Voluntary Exit Scheme page on the Department of Finance website https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/articles/northern-ireland-civil-service-voluntary-exit-scheme</p> <p>The Department for Communities works with a range of Arm's Length bodies. A number of these have also operated exit schemes and the details for each are set out below.</p> <p>Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People</p> <p>3 staff exited - 1 Deputy Principal, 1 Staff Officer and 1 EO2. Two posts were suppressed and the Staff Officer post was partially suppressed (changed from full time to</p>
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part time). A part time Staff Officer post was advertised ;no posts were filled by internal promotion.

Armagh Observatory and Planetarium

2 staff exited - 1 Grade 6 and 1 Deputy Principal. Both posts were suppressed; neither post was later advertised or filled by internal promotion.

Arts Council NI

7 staff exited - 1 Deputy Principal, 3 Staff Officers, 1 EO2 and 2 Administrative Officers. All posts were suppressed and none were later advertised or filled by internal promotion.

Sport NI

7.49 staff exited - 1 Deputy Principal, 1 Staff Officer, 1 EO, 3EO2s and 1.49 Administrative Officers. All posts were suppressed and none were later advertised or filled by internal promotion.

Libraries NI

19 staff exited - 1 Senior Administrative Officer, 5 Administrative Officers, 4 Senior Executive Officers, 7 Executive Officers, 1 Senior Clerical Officer and 1 Clerical Officer. In addition one Senior Clerical Officer was released under voluntary redundancy (funded by Libraries NI). All posts were suppressed and none were later advertised or filled by internal promotion.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

361 staff exited as shown in the table below. All positions vacated as a result of the Voluntary Exit Scheme have been suppressed. No positions vacated have been refilled on the basis of their original structure.

Grades	No. of staff exited under VES
LV01	8

				LV02	39
				LV03	33
				LV04	87
				LV05	54
				LV06	34
				LV07	29
				LV08	5
				LV09	8
				TL02	27
				TL03	13
				TL07	3
				TL08	3
				Manual	18
				Total	361

Parking at Ballymagee and Kilmaine Primary Schools

<p>AQW 5367/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Alex Easton (DUP - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Infrastructure what can his Department do to help alleviate the parking issue at Ballymagee and Kilmaine Primary Schools when dropping children to and from school.</p> <p>School related parking issues occur during peak parental movement times and this is a common complaint at many educational facilities throughout the north. These short term problems are especially prevalent at educational establishments which deny vehicular access for drop off and pick up purposes thereby leaving no alternative therefore other than to park on the road itself.</p> <p>My Department has already provided measures at Ballymagee Primary School in the form of electronic flashing amber school ahead warning signs and school keep clear road markings to warn drivers of the presence of the school in conjunction with red textured carriageway bands denoting 'School Ahead' text provided within.</p> <p>Kilmaine Primary School is within a residential area and has school patrol signs and school keep clear road markings to warn drivers of the presence of the school.</p> <p>My Department's officials work closely with the Education Board to address issues which arise around schools and I can assure you that these areas will continue to be monitored in the interests of road safety.</p> <p>I can also advise that whilst my traffic engineers work with others to install these various engineering measures, that parents, residents and all road users have a role to play in following the relevant traffic signs and road markings to ensure the wellbeing of our young people making their way to and from school.</p>
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Impact of new ticketing system on post-primary pupils

<p>AQW 4024/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Paula Bradshaw (APNI - South Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Infrastructure for an update on the new ticketing system for use on railways, with regard to an assurance that post-primary school pupils will not be disadvantaged by it.</p> <p>The new ticketing system will apply across both Bus and Rail and will ensure greater flexibility and convenience to all Translink customers. It is being implemented to bring more advantages to the travelling public, including post-primary school pupils.</p>
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Coordination between schools and Further Education Colleges

<p>AQO 559/16- 21</p>	<p>Dr Stephen Farry (APNI - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for the Economy, in relation to the co-ordination between schools and Further Education colleges, how he plans to work with the Minister of Education on the development of a strategy for 14 to 19 year olds.</p> <p>As I have previously advised the member this is a matter we will address comprehensively in the context of the new Programme for Government.</p> <p>There is much we can do to ensure that our education system delivers the best possible outcomes for young people. That said, I am also clear that where we can make early progress there is no reason to delay.</p> <p>An area where I and the Minister of Education are agreed that early action would be useful is that of careers guidance. I believe we have a comprehensive curriculum offer in both schools and colleges, but it is complex and too often choices based on incomplete information or on conflicting advice.</p> <p>There are a number of key decision points but those most</p>
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		<p>important are at 14 when GCSE choices are made and at 16, the end of compulsory education. It is vital that good choices are made at these key decision points to ensure young people follow the path that best meets their ambitions.</p> <p>For these reasons the Minister of Education and I have endorsed the joint policy commitments outlined in the Careers Strategy - Preparing for Success, which provides the strategic direction for the delivery of careers education and guidance until 2020.</p> <p>Together we recently attended the third meeting of the Careers Advisory Forum established to provide independent advice to both of us on key areas including employer and education engagement, at both a strategic and local level.</p> <p>The Minister of Education and I will work together to ensure a coherent and sufficiently broad range of subject choices and pathways are available to meet the needs of every young person, as well as the needs of the economy.</p> <p>We will want to see as much complimentary as possible in the interface between colleges and schools</p>
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Support for young people over 19 with learning disabilities attending further education

<p>AQW 3041/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Cathal Boylan (SF - Newry and Armagh)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for the Economy what provisions are in place within the Southern Education Authority to assist young people, over 19, and with learning disabilities, attending a Further Education course.[Priority Written]</p> <p>My Department provides financial assistance to students over 19, including those with disabilities through the Further Education Awards and Hardship Fund. Both funds are means tested to ensure that support is directed at those students most</p>
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		<p>in need and are designed, first and foremost, for any Further Education student who is experiencing exceptional financial difficulty with any costs associated with learning. However, this assistance is not directed specifically at students with disabilities.</p> <p>The maximum amount payable through a combination of both Further Education Awards and Hardship Fund is £3,500 per annum in total. Further Education Awards provide bursaries for eligible students to assist with general living, but does not have a specific transport element. Hardship Funds provide assistance with fees, books and equipment, travel costs and associated living costs. Assistance with transport is based on actual transport rates.</p> <p>My Department also provides financial support through the Additional Support Fund, paid to Further Education colleges, for the provision of technical and personal support to assist students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities with their learning.</p>
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DAERA promotion of Children's Services Co-operation Act

<p>AQW 5247/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Steven Agnew (GPNI - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs what arrangements have been made with her Department to promote co-operation as required by Section 2(2) of the Children's Co-operation Act.</p> <p>You will be aware that in terms of the Executive making arrangements to promote co-operation as outlined in the Children's Co-operation Act, this is being considered in line with the development of the new Children and Young People's Strategy. The new Strategy is expected to outline how co-operation could be promoted through the agreement of key principles of co-operative working; the potential establishment of</p>
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		<p>effective structures; and through the proactive identification of opportunities to co-operate.</p> <p>My Department’s Children Champion and officials will work with the Department of Education, who have responsibility for policy development affecting children and young people, and will also continue to collaborate with Agencies, stakeholders and children and young people’s organisations to achieve the outcomes contained within the new Strategy.</p>
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Training for school staff in signs of mental health problems in children

<p>AQW 5437/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Phillip Logan (DUP - North Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education whether teachers and classroom assistants are trained on the signs of mental health problems in children.</p> <p>Consideration of pupil emotional health and wellbeing is included within initial teacher training.</p> <p>Teachers and classroom assistants also receive training and support throughout their career on health and wellbeing matters from the Education Authority. Examples of the centre and school based training include:</p> <p>‘Promoting Mental Health in Schools: Developing a Whole-School Policy’ – a one day course that explores the prevalence and management of mental health issues in schools and examines the role that schools can play in the promotion of mental health.</p> <p>‘Promoting Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing in Children and Young People’ – a two day course which incorporates strengthening strategies to support socially and emotionally challenged pupils.</p> <p>Further, my Department provides information and guidance to schools, through the ‘iMatter’ programme, to support school staff in identifying the signs of mental health problems in pupils.</p>
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		In practice, teachers and classroom assistants who identify issues of concern in pupils refer the issue to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection for further action, which may include accessing support from the Education Authority or referral to social services, as appropriate.
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How PEACE IV funding has been spent

AQW 5408/16- 21	Ms Kellie Armstrong (APNI - Strangford)	<p>To ask the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 2060/16-21, how much of the €35.3m PEACE IV funding has been spent to date on Shared Education.</p> <p>The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) has not yet completed its application process to appoint delivery agents for the Peace IV Shared Education thematic area and consequently there has been no spend to date. Details of the SEUPB's application call timetable are available under the Peace IV section of their website (www.seupb.eu).</p>
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Support for parents and pupils going through special needs statementing

AQW 5331/16- 21	Mrs Sandra Overend (UUP - Mid Ulster)	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline the formal support processes available for parents and pupils going through the special educational needs statementing process.</p> <p>Support for parents of a child in school undergoing statutory assessment is likely to be operating at several levels. In the first instance, the school principal and/or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) must have permission to make an initial referral to the educational psychologist. In those cases that need to progress to statutory assessment, the school will then discuss and explain the process to the parent/s. The educational psychologist is likely to have met with the parent to discuss the statutory advice, including an explanation</p>
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of any further assessments that have been undertaken. The psychologist will answer any questions on the process of statutory assessment.

Once statutory assessment is underway, every child has a named officer from the Education Authority's (EA) special education teams that the parent can contact. In addition, the documentation that goes out to parents in regard to their child's statutory assessment includes information on the statutory assessment process and details of a parent website where frequently asked questions in regard to the statutory assessment process can be found.

The documentation also includes information on the Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS) should the parent be unhappy at any stage of the process and wish to speak to an independent party or ask the DARS to mediate on their behalf. Each local office of the EA has a SEN Advice and Information Officer who can be contacted by parents and who will either answer their queries, put them in touch with the appropriate person to answer their query or forward any information requested.

A child undergoing statutory assessment is at Stage 4 of the Code of Practice and the support received while undergoing statutory assessment will vary according to the individual needs of the child and the type of SEN.

As the child is at Stage 4, any additional support required by the pupil should be put in place by the school until the statutory assessment is completed. This support should remain in place until the EA decides to issue a statement of SEN and the resources outlined in part 3 (provision) in the statement and funded by the EA are in place.

		<p>In exceptional cases and where the school has no available resources, the EA may at its discretion put resources in place for a pupil at Stage 4 prior to the statement being made. In some areas of SEN, the EA provides support for pupils at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice. The services/resources will continue to support the child throughout the statutory assessment process and until the resources that the statement may bring are in place.</p> <p>The Health and Social Care Trust's multi-disciplinary teams that support pupils in school may also offer short term support during the statutory assessment process. Schools can access these services directly. Schools can also access Community resources for the pupil through, e.g. Family Support Hubs. Schools can also access training from EA services and apply advice from the following documents until the resources follow from any statement issued:</p> <p>Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (1998 and Supplement 2005); Good Practice Guidelines for Schools to meet the Special Educational Needs of Pupils at the School-Based Stages of the Code of Practice; DE Resource File for Schools to Support Children with Special Educational Needs; and Supporting pupils with medication needs in mainstream schools.</p>
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Interim measures for schools waiting for statement of special needs

<p>AQW 5330/16- 21</p>	<p>Mrs Sandra Overend (UUP - Mid Ulster)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline the interim measures in place for schools with children waiting for a statement of special needs.</p> <p>Where a child is undergoing statutory assessment at Stage 4 of the Code of Practice (CoP) on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (SEN), the support received will vary according to the individual needs and circumstances of the child.</p> <p>As the child is at Stage 4 of the CoP, any additional support perceived to be required by the pupil should be put in place and funded by the school until the statutory assessment is completed and, if a statement is made, the resources to be funded by the Education Authority (EA) are in place. In exceptional cases and where a school has no available resources, and/or the statutory process is delayed, the EA may, at its discretion, put additional resources in place for a pupil at Stage 4 prior to the completion of the statutory assessment and a statement being made.</p> <p>In some areas of SEN the EA provides support for pupils at Stage 3 of the CoP. The services/resources will continue to support the child throughout the statutory assessment process and until the resources that the statement may bring are in place.</p> <p>The Health and Social Care Trust multi-disciplinary teams that support pupils in school may also offer short term support during the statutory assessment process. Schools can access these services directly. Many schools also access or fund resources available in the local community.</p> <p>Schools can also access training from EA services and apply</p>
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		<p>advice from the following documents until the resources follow from any statement issued:</p> <p>Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (1998 and Supplement 2005);</p> <p>Good Practice Guidelines for Schools to meet the Special Educational Needs of Pupils at the School-Based Stages of the Code of Practice;</p> <p>DE Resource File for Schools to Support Children with Special Educational Needs; and</p> <p>Supporting</p>
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Appeals on EA decision on educational statement

<p>AQW 5328/16- 21</p>	<p>Mrs Sandra Overend (UUP - Mid Ulster)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education how many appeals have been made following decisions by the Education Authority on a statement.</p> <p>The Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST) is an independent body which considers, among other things, parental appeals against the decisions of the Education Authority (EA) about a child's special educational needs (SEN), where the parents of the child cannot reach agreement with the EA.</p> <p>If the EA decides not to carry out a formal assessment of a child's educational needs at the request of a parent or a school, or if, after making an assessment, the EA proposes not to make a statement, the child's parent may appeal to SENDIST. A parent may also make an appeal to SENDIST against the contents of a statement.</p> <p>SENDIST has advised that the number of appeals made to it during the period April 2015 to March 2016 was 145.</p>
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Children with autism not attending school while waiting to be statemented

<p>AQW 5306/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Gerry Carroll (PBPA - West Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail how many children with autism are not attending school due to lack of support services for children waiting to be statemented.</p> <p>The Education Authority (EA), which is responsible for identifying, assessing and, in appropriate cases, making provision for children with SEN, is not able to provide the information requested since data on pupil non-attendance is not collated according to the diagnostic category of a pupil. The reasons behind any child's non-attendance at school can be complex and varied, and this is no different for children with autism.</p> <p>The EA has a range of services that support children who are experiencing difficulties in attending school and these supports are not dependant on a statement. Support packages are based on the assessed needs of the child, their views, the views of their parents and consultation with the school where they are enrolled. In cases where a child has autism and is finding attendance at school to be stressful, the EA's Autism Advisory Service, can help the school identify and address any difficulties that may be inhibiting attendance and advise on supporting strategies that should be considered for inclusion in the child's Individual Education Plan.</p> <p>The Autism Advisory Service will also advise the school on reasonable and supportive adjustments that may be made to the child's learning and social environment. Where appropriate, specialist services also provide direct support to the child or young person to help them develop skills that will enable them to better manage the school's social and learning environment.</p>
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Process for referral to an education psychologist

<p>AQW 5150/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Kellie Armstrong (APNI - Strangford)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education (i) to outline the criteria that schools have to follow before a referral is made to an education psychologist; and (ii) whether there is a set number of referrals a school can make.</p> <p>(i) Due to the wide variation in the nature and complexity of children’s special educational needs, it is not possible to devise a single set of criteria applicable to all children on which to decide on educational psychology involvement. Statutory guidance is available to assist schools in considering the circumstances of each child. This includes the ‘Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (1998 and Supplement 2005)’.</p> <p>In addition advisory resources are available to assist schools in considering the circumstances of each child, such as: ‘Provisional Criteria for Initiating Statutory Assessments of Special Educational Needs and for Making Statements of Special Educational Needs’; ‘Good Practice Guidelines for Schools to meet the Special Educational Needs of Pupils at the School-Based Stages of the Code of Practice’; ‘Resource File for Schools to Support Children with Special Educational Needs’.</p> <p>EA educational psychologists provide advice and support to schools in forming decisions as to the children for whom they wish to utilise the allocation of educational psychology time available to the school within the current capacity of the educational psychology service. This is achieved through direct consultation with the principal of the school and/or the school’s special needs co-ordinator.</p> <p>(ii) Educational psychology is a statutory service. Priority is given within the service to providing the psychological advice</p>
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		<p>required for statutory assessments of children’s special educational needs (i.e. Stage 4 of the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs). The educational psychology service also provides advice for non-statutory assessments at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice. Whilst there are no limits imposed on the number of children that may be referred to an educational psychologist for assessment at Stage 3, the Education Authority (EA) operates a time allocation model for Educational Psychology Services where each school receives an allocation of educational psychologists’ time and then, in partnership with the EA, the school prioritises the children for assessment.</p> <p>Working closely with their named Educational Psychologist, schools prioritise their pupils’ needs based on the principles of consultation, equity of access and flexibility. If information is presented to the Educational Psychologist during consultation which indicates that a pupil has exceptional circumstances, such referrals will continue to receive priority.</p> <p>The EA stresses that it applies the time allocation system in as flexible a manner as possible so that, whenever possible, if a child is in relatively urgent need of an assessment, the child will get an assessment even if the time allocated to the school has already been used up.</p>
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Cost of referring a child to an educational psychologist

<p>AQW 5148/16-21</p>	<p>Ms Kellie Armstrong (APNI - Strangford)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education whether the cost of referring a child to an educational psychologist is met by the school's budget.</p> <p>The cost of referring a child to an EA educational psychologist is not met by the school’s budget.</p>
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Number of child referrals to an educational psychologist

<p>AQW 5149/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Kellie Armstrong (APNI - Strangford)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail the number of children referred to an educational psychologist. broken down by (i) Education Authority region; and (ii) primary or post-primary sector, in each of the last five academic years.</p> <p>The Education Authority has advised that they cannot provide this data with confidence given the recent changes with its Educational Management System upgrade.</p>
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Provision for young people transitioning to adult services

<p>AQW 4978/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Oliver McMullan (SF - East Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education for an update on Post Special Educational Needs Provision in Education, Employment and Training for people with learning disabilities in East Antrim.</p> <p>Under the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, the Department of Education (DE) ceases to have statutory responsibility for young people once they have attained the age of 19 years and are no longer a registered pupil at a school. Whilst young people with statements of special educational needs (SEN) will have engaged in the statutory education transition planning process to prepare them for leaving school, DE has no statutory remit to make SEN provision in Education, Employment and Training for people with learning disabilities post-school.</p>
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Schools policy on Relationship and Sexuality Education

<p>AQW 4896/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Barry McElduff (SF - West Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline his Department's strategy and action plan for ensuring that all schools develop a policy on Relationship and Sexuality Education, including focus on LGBT+ rights, inclusivity and concerns.</p> <p>The Department of Education (DE) does not have a strategy and action plan for ensuring that all schools develop a policy on Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE). While DE guidance requires all grant-aided schools to develop a policy on how they will address RSE within the curriculum, this is a policy matter which is devolved to schools. In August 2015, CCEA produced revised RSE guidance for schools which outlined the inclusive approach that is required for RSE, in particular the need to cover issues such as sexual orientation and gender identity.</p> <p>DE Circular 2015/22, which issued in August 2015, reminded schools that they should have an RSE policy in place. In addition, DE Circular 2010/01, which issued in January 2010, advised schools of the need to take account of the Equality Commission's guidance when developing or reviewing their RSE policy, thereby ensuring that all children are 'treated with respect and dignity and are not treated any less favourably on grounds of their actual or perceived sexual orientation'</p>
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Implications of Brexit on PEACE and INTERREG Programmes

<p>AQW 5731/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Patsy McGlone (SDLP - Mid Ulster)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Finance whether he has written to the EU Regional Policy Commissioner regarding the potential implications of Brexit on the PEACE and INTERREG Programmes; and will he place on public record any response received.</p> <p>Following the Referendum result on EU membership, I wrote to Corina Cretu, the European Commissioner for Regional Policy, with my counterpart in the South, outlining our continued commitment to the successful implementation of the PEACE IV and INTERREG VA programmes and requesting a meeting to clarify the basis on which we could proceed. I received a response stating Commission officials would not engage in any discussions until a notification of Article 50 has taken place.</p> <p>I have now placed this response in the Assembly library.</p>
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DoF promotion of Children Services Co-operation Act

<p>AQW 5547/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Steven Agnew (GPNI - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Finance what arrangements have been made in his Department to promote co-operation as required by Section 2(2) of the Children's Services Co-operation Act.</p> <p>My Department will, in the context of the new Children and Young People's Strategy and the Review of Civil and Family Justice, seek to identify new collaborative opportunities that will help to promote the best interests of children and young people. DoF is also developing guidance on the pooling of budgets which will help to facilitate co-operation between children's authorities. This will be incorporated in the "In year monitoring guidance" in due course.</p>
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Budget allocation to Department of Education from 'sugar tax'

<p>AQW 4101/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Chris Lyttle (APNI - East Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Finance to detail how much of the Executive's sugar tax fund will be allocated to the Department of Education to increase schools' physical activity and breakfast clubs.</p> <p>The Executive will receive a Barnett share of any additional spending in England, financed by the sugar tax announced by the British Chancellor in the 2016 March Budget. Allocations flowing through the Barnett Formula are unhypothecated for allocation by the Executive in line with local needs and priorities. It will therefore be for the Executive to decide how to allocate this funding as part of future budget processes.</p> <p>I am disappointed that this Tax/levy is being imposed over our heads by Westminster thus preventing us from shaping the initiative in the best way to suit our local needs and wishes. This is a breach of the final settlement with the devolved administration.</p> <p>However it is my hope that additional resources will enable us to look afresh at key issues around Health, Education, Sport, Recreation and Travel issues which span many Government Departments.</p>
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Update on Fresh Start Panel Report

<p>AQO 524/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr David Ford (APNI - South Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Justice to outline the progress made by her Department and its arm's length bodies in implementing the recommendations of the Fresh Start Panel Report on the Disbandment of Paramilitary Groups.</p> <p>I am pleased with the progress we are making on implementing the Panel's comprehensive and helpful recommendations. Since we received the Panel's report at the end of May we have made significant progress in a number of areas. Firstly we agreed an Executive response, involving all Departments, to this complex and difficult issue, and published an Executive action plan setting out how we intend to take each of the recommendations forward. We have also made some early allocations of funding to support work in communities and law enforcement and have begun preparatory work on a number of actions, including the programme for women.</p> <p>I reiterate what I said previously, that this is about ensuring that we develop a comprehensive and cohesive programme of work that does not just become a tick box exercise. To do this meaningfully and in collaboration with the communities who this will impact does take time. We have been working to develop an implementation plan and to consider how to allocate funding meaningfully. We will be taking forward a process of co-design with local communities to develop appropriate interventions, and Officials and statutory partners held a Design Day on 27 September to begin planning this.</p> <p>The programme of work needed to tackle paramilitarism and associated criminality is much broader than simply a justice response. However, I recognise that my Department and its arm's length bodies will have a significant role to play, and this represents a significant programme of work for us. We have begun planning and preparatory work on all the justice recommendations and this will inform the development of the implementation plan.</p>
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		<p>For example, we will soon launch a public awareness campaign, we are implementing reforms aimed at speeding up justice, we have begun work to review legislation on serious and organised crime and we are taking forward a feasibility study for a restorative justice centre of excellence.</p>
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Number of young people at Woodland Juvenile Justice Centre

<p>AQW 5657/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Paul Frew (DUP - North Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Justice to detail the current number of young people held in Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre, broken down by (i) gender and age; (ii) those sentenced, on remand and admitted under the Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 (PACE); (iii) geographical location prior to admission when admitted under PACE; (iv) number of PACE admissions to date this year; (v) percentage that are looked after children; (vi) those whose stay has been extended due to not being able to perfect bail; (vii) those receiving support for mental health needs; (viii) drug and alcohol misuse; and (ix) special educational needs.</p> <p>The following details relate to the current number of young people resident in Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre on Friday 21 October 2016: There were 22 young people in custody – 20 males and 2 females Their ages are broken down as follows: 17 years – 15 16 years – 4 15 years – 1 14 years – 2 There were 5 young people sentenced, 17 on remand and none held under PACE. There were no young people held in Woodlands under PACE on 21 October 2016. There were 152 PACE admissions from 1 January 2016 to 21 October 2016.</p>
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		<p>36.4% (8) of the young people currently in Woodlands are looked after children.</p> <p>One of these young people had their stay extended due to not being able to perfect bail.</p> <p>Eleven of these young people are receiving support from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) for mental health needs.</p> <p>Nineteen of these young people are noted to have issues with drug and/or alcohol misuse.</p> <p>Eight of these young people have special educational needs.</p>
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Review of Family and Civil Justice

AQW 5593/16- 21	Lord Morrow of Clogher Valley (DUP - Fermanagh and South Tyrone)	<p>To ask the Minister of Justice for her assessment on the Review of Family and Civil Justice by Lord Justice John Gillen.</p> <p>I very much welcome the initiative of the Lord Chief Justice in commissioning the Review of Civil and Family Justice and the significant work undertaken by Lord Justice Gillen who, supported by his Review and Reference Groups, has produced two draft Reports for consultation. It is right that the judiciary and others working in the civil and family justice system should play an active role in considering how it can be improved to deliver the best possible outcomes for court users. Together the two draft reports contain almost 400 recommendations spanning a wide range of issues; some of which are strategic and some operational.</p> <p>I expect to receive a final report from the Lord Chief Justice in early 2017 which will inform my overall policy on improving access to justice in the civil and family courts.</p>
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Education received by young people at Woodlands

<p>AQW 5543/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Sammy Douglas MBE, MCA (DUP - East Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Justice the number of hours per week of education received per person, including core curriculum teaching for (i) under 16's; and (ii) over 16's, in the Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre.</p> <p>Woodlands Education and Learning Centre has recently transitioned to become an Education Authority designated Education Other Than at School (EOTAS) Centre, where academic and vocational learning combine with other interventions to support the educational and personal development needs of each young person.</p> <p>My officials have been working closely with colleagues in the Department of Education and Education Authority to develop a core curriculum appropriate to needs and age and to roll-out programmes that are reflective of the change in population demographic within Woodlands.</p> <p>It is too soon to have a detailed breakdown under the EOTAS framework by age group of the hours delivered but we do anticipate a significant improvement towards the 22.5 hours per week standard set for EOTAS students, compared with the 15 hours per week average, per child, during 2015 that had resulted from short-term difficulties in maintaining levels of teaching cover.</p>
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Staff in the Education Learning Centre at Woodlands

<p>AQW 5360/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Sammy Douglas MBE, MCA (DUP - East Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Justice how many permanent staff are currently employed in the Education Learning Centre at Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre.</p> <p>There are four permanent staff currently employed in the Education and Learning Centre at Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre - one Head of Education, two Teachers and one Instructor.</p>
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Sexual assault crimes against children in West Tyrone

	<p>AQW 5079/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Daniel McCrossan (SDLP - West Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Justice to detail the number of successful convictions for sexual assault crimes against children in West Tyrone, broken down over the past three years.</p> <p>Sexual offences involving children may be prosecuted under various legislation, including the Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008, the Sexual Offences Act 2003, the Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland) 1968, the Punishment of Incest Act 1908, the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1885 and the Offences Against the Person Act 1861.</p> <p>Departmental databases do not contain information on the location of an offence, therefore information in relation to convictions at Dungannon, Strabane and Omagh courts has been provided. The most recent three year period for which information in relation to convictions at court for sexual offences against a child is available is 2013 – 2015.</p> <p>Convictions at Dungannon, Strabane and Omagh courts for sexual offences specifying the involvement of a child, 2013 – 2015</p>
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Year	Convictions
2013	12
2014	6
2015	5

Notes:

Figures relate to convictions which included at least one count of the offences specified.

The figures provided relate to convictions for all classifications of the offences specified.

Figures relate to initial disposals at court: disposals as a result of appeals are not included.

Figures relate to offences in the sexual offences category that specify the involvement of a child. Other offences, with more generic descriptions, but where the victim may have been a child, have not been included, as there is no way to identify victim age from data held.

NICCY Summary: Written Assembly Questions weeks ending 4 November 2016

Executive Office promotion of Children's Services Co-operation Act

<p>AQW 5221/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Steven Agnew (GPNI - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the arrangements their Department has made to promote co-operation as required by Section 2(2) of the Children's Services Co-operation Act.</p> <p>We refer the member to the answer given to AQW 2477/16-21. The Executive Office will cooperate fully in respect of its relevant responsibilities by the process described in the answer.</p>
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Plans to implement temporary 20 mph zones at schools

<p>AQW 5681/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Roy Beggs (UUP - East Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Infrastructure to outline his plans to implement temporary 20 mph zones at schools during peak travel times in the morning and afternoon.</p> <p>Following the successful piloting of part-time limits at three primary schools, further schemes have been installed, or are in the process of installation, at four more schools.</p> <p>My Department has a statutory duty to promote road safety and, within the context of the Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy, does this through a range of rolling road safety educational activities, engineering and other initiatives. Children and young people are amongst the most vulnerable groups using our roads and I am committed to ensuring that they use our roads safely, both in the school vicinity and the wider community.</p> <p>I am therefore keen to roll out this important safety measure to other schools, especially those located on roads where the national speed limit applies. However, with installation costs currently in the region of £50,000 per school, these systems are expensive to provide and maintain. My officials are currently</p>
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investigating an alternative and more cost effective method to provide part time enforceable 20mph speed limits at schools which would have the potential to allow more schools to be treated, subject to available funding in the current challenging financial position.

Given that over 95% of road traffic collisions where someone is killed or seriously injured are due to human error, there are a number of types of risks to children's safety at schools arising from road traffic and driver behaviour. Therefore, in addition to making proven engineering interventions, my Department also challenges driver behaviour and through the road safety campaigns, reminds motorists of their responsibility to themselves and other road users. In recent weeks, a series of road safety messages have been delivered through social media, radio, television and outdoor advertising, addressing a range of road safety behaviours on the journey to and from school to enhance child passenger and child pedestrian safety. My Department's current anti speeding campaign, aimed at drivers, reinforces the message that 'you can never control the consequences if you speed', with the reminder that the equivalent of a classroom of our children have been killed due to speeding since 2000.

My Department also provides and delivers a range of road safety resources and initiatives to schools here to teach children how to be safe as they use the road, as pedestrians, as passengers and as cyclists. These initiatives include the Road Safety Calendar Teaching Aid, Practical Child Pedestrian Safety Training and Cycling Proficiency training.

I remain committed to continuing to work towards reducing deaths and serious injuries on our roads. I recognise the continuing challenges of preventing road deaths and serious injuries and as such my Department will continue to address the issues using all practicable methods.

Collaboration between Education and Health Departments to improve mental health

<p>AQW 5874/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Robbie Butler (UUP - Lagan Valley)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail any collaboration between his Department and the Department of Health aimed at improving mental health among secondary school pupils.</p> <p>My Department works in partnership with other Departments and agencies, including the Department of Health, in order to provide an appropriate response to identified need on a cohesive, co-ordinated basis.</p> <p>To this end, the 'iMatter' Programme (see below) and specific developments within the programme are part of the Department's contribution to a number of cross-departmental strategies and action plans, including: (Draft) Protect Life 2 – A Strategy for Suicide Prevention in the North of Ireland Making Life Better 2013-2023: Strategic Framework for Public Health; Bamford Report (Mental Health Review) 2012-15 – currently under Evaluation by contributing Departments; and the Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2013-2020.</p> <p>In relation to specific actions taken by my Department, under the I-Matter programme, new guidance 'Protecting Life in Schools – Helping Protect Against Suicide' issued to schools in March 2016 followed by supporting materials in September 2016. This guidance is allied to the 'Protect Life' strategy and follows the issue of 'A Guide to Managing Critical Incidents in Schools', which issued to school in February 2014.</p> <p>I-Matter As I explained in my last answer to your question about mental health in schools, the 'i-Matter' Programme addresses how the</p>
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		<p>entire school community should be engaged in promoting resilient emotional health for all pupils, what support systems are available for vulnerable pupils, and what support is available to schools in the event of a crisis. The Programme aims to support a school in integrating its individual policies and support systems in a consistent and coherent way.</p> <p>Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) You may be aware also of the ICSS. This service is currently available in the post-primary sector and post-primary cohort in the special school sector and provides over 39,000 counselling sessions annually.</p> <p>There is considerable evidential and research information to confirm the position that counselling in schools supports the emotional health and wellbeing of young people. Pupils experiencing stress or emotional problems find it difficult to reach their potential. Where staff can recognise and respond appropriately to their needs the educational outcome is maximised. An independent counselling service can be such a response to addressing pupil needs.</p>
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Funding for voluntary sector youth centres

<p>AQW 5868/16- 21</p>	<p>Mrs Rosemary Barton (UUP - Fermanagh and South Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline what funding is currently allocated to provide services for children and young people in voluntary sector youth centres.</p> <p>The Education Authority (EA) has advised that £5,503,929 has been allocated by the EA in the 2016-17 financial year to provide services for children and young people in voluntary sector youth centres.</p>
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Policy on home to school transport

<p>AQW 5867/16- 21</p>	<p>Mrs Sandra Overend (UUP - Mid Ulster)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 55546/11-16, whether it is necessary to revise the current policy on home to school transport.</p> <p>The Independent Review of Home to School was published in December 2014 and the policy recommendations contained therein are under consideration.</p> <p>Any decision to amend the current policy would be subject to full public consultation. Following this I will decide if, and to what extent, the current policy needs revised.</p>
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Monitoring of bullying in schools

<p>AQW 5820/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Colin McGrath (SDLP - South Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education (i) whether a record is kept of instances of bullying in schools; and (ii) to detail the number of instances in each of the last five years, broken down by primary and post-primary schools.</p> <p>Schools are not currently required to record bullying incidences in school and the only figures available to the Department are for cases where bullying has been cited as the reason for a pupil being suspended or expelled. These figures are published annually by the Department and can be accessed via the following web-page: https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/pupil-suspensions-and-expulsions</p> <p>The 'Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016' was granted Royal Assent on 12 May 2016. One of the specific issues this legislation is intended to address is to introduce a requirement for all schools to centrally record incidents of bullying, their motivation and their outcome. This will allow us, going forward, to quantify the true scale of the problem and any emerging trends which may require further specific interventions.</p>
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		<p>While the provisions of this Act are not yet in force, I intend that they will be in place for the start of 2017-18 school year.</p>
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Counselling for bullying in schools

<p>AQW 5796/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Roy Beggs (UUP - East Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education how many school children have received counselling for bullying, in each of the last three years.</p> <p>In 2013/14 a total of 27,890 counselling sessions were delivered in post-primary schools. Bullying was not recorded in the top 10 issues raised. In Special Schools, a total of 4861 sessions were delivered to post-primary age pupils with 3% recorded as bullying. 2014/15 a total of 28,474 counselling sessions were delivered in post-primary schools. Bullying was not recorded in the top 10 issues raised, with 0.5% recorded as bullying. In Special Schools, a total of 5837 sessions were delivered to post-primary age pupils. There were no recorded cases of bullying.</p> <p>2015/16 a total of 33,330 counselling sessions were delivered in post-primary schools. Bullying was not recorded in the overall top 10 issues raised, with 1.2% recorded as bullying. In Special Schools, a total of 5163 sessions were delivered to post-primary age pupils with no recorded cases of bullying.</p>
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Promotion of integrated education as per the UNCRC report

<p>AQW 5774/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Steven Agnew (GPNI - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education how he is promoting integrated education, as set out in the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child report.</p> <p>My Department does not set targets for the growth of any school sector, nor does it promote any sector. As part of its statutory duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education, my Department funds the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) specifically to promote integrated education. Funding of £623,000 is being provided to NICIE in the 2016/17 financial year.</p> <p>I will also give careful consideration to the recommendations of the Independent Review of Integrated Education, which I expect to receive shortly.</p>
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Schools taking part in shared education initiatives

<p>AQW 5753/16- 21</p>	<p>Mrs Rosemary Barton (UUP - Fermanagh and South Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail how many schools have taken part in Shared Education Initiatives in each year over the last five years.</p> <p>Over 500 schools engaged in a form of Shared Education over the past five years. However, in the absence of a common definition of Shared Education the nature and type of sharing has varied.</p> <p>The Shared Education Act (NI) 2016 established a legislative definition of what constitutes Shared Education. There are currently three Shared Education initiatives which satisfy the legislative definition: the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project launched in December 2014, of which 314 schools, in 134 partnerships are actively engaged; A further call for</p>
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		<p>applications announced in September 2016 is in progress; the Shared Education Campus Programme, of which to date ten schools, in five applicant projects have been given approval to progress to a planning stage; and the Strule Shared Education Campus Programme, which involves six schools.</p>
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Special Education Needs provision in primary schools

<p>AQW 5702/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Oliver McMullan (SF - East Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education whether he will increase Special Education Needs provision in primary schools.</p> <p>The statutory responsibility for securing provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) rests with schools and the Education Authority (EA) which is responsible for identifying, assessing and, in appropriate cases, making provision for children with SEN in all school settings, including primary schools.</p> <p>It is therefore a matter for schools and the EA to determine the appropriate level of provision required for children with SEN to help them achieve their full potential. Support for children with SEN is based on the individual needs of the child. I recognise that the EA's arrangements for special educational provision and the delivery of resources, support services, capacity building and training are all key to improving the provision for children with SEN, including those in primary schools.</p> <p>I am aware of the increasing demand for SEN support and the costs associated with this. A significant amount of the EA's budget is being spent on special education services such as special schools, specialist pupil support services, SEN classroom assistants and transport costs. Special education funding has been prioritised, as far as possible, as part of the</p>
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		budget setting process over the last number of years, and additional funding for SEN has been secured from the Executive as part of in-year monitoring rounds
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Transport from schools to learning disability respite care facilities

AQW 5682/16- 21	Mr Chris Lyttle (APNI - East Belfast)	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline why the Education Authority does not provide transport from schools to learning disability respite care facilities.</p> <p>The Education Authority (EA) has advised that its statutory responsibility is to provide transport assistance from the permanent home address to the school attended. Where pupils are placed in respite care facilities, transport assistance will normally be provided by the EA if it can be facilitated within existing resources and where no additional cost is incurred. Where transport to such facilities would result in additional cost, responsibility lies outside of the Education Authority's remit</p>
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Future of Fleming Fulton nursery

AQW 5678/16- 21	Ms Catherine Seeley (SF - Upper Bann)	<p>To ask the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 3491/16-21, whether there are intentions to close informally the nursery at Fleming Fulton.</p> <p>The provision of nursery education at Fleming Fulton is a matter for the Education Authority (EA) in the first instance. The EA has advised that, whilst there is no nursery provision operating out of the school in the 2016/17 academic year, the nursery is not closed.</p> <p>The EA is currently reviewing nursery provision in all special schools. Any future proposals relating to Fleming Fulton School will be a matter for the EA, in its role as planning authority, to</p>
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		consider in the context of area planning of the special school sector.
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Attendance of religious worship in schools

AQW 5624/16- 21	Mr Steven Agnew (GPNI - North Down)	<p>To ask the Minister of Education whether he is aware of any schools taking action on the recommendation from the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child that children should be able to decide on their own not to attend religious worship in schools.</p> <p>My department does not monitor collective worship in schools. It is for Boards of Governors, in consultation with the school trustees and the principal, to decide the arrangements for collective worship, having regard to the ethos of the school and its registered pupils. The legislation is clear that parental consent is required for children to withdraw from collective worship.</p>
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Waiting lists for children to see educational psychologists

AQW 5438/16- 21	Mr Phillip Logan (DUP - North Antrim)	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail how many children are waiting to see educational psychologists, broken down by constituency.</p> <p>The Education Authority has confirmed it is not possible to break this information down by constituency; therefore it has been broken down by Education Authority Office. The numbers relate to children in all age-groups, including pre-school, referred to the Educational Psychology Service for the first time at Stage 3 of the SEN Code of Practice. Some may have already been seen recently but remain listed until the response to the referral has been completed.</p>
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				EA OFFICE	
				Belfast	68
				North Eastern (Ballymena)	225
				South Eastern (Dundonald)	86
				Southern (Armagh)	414
				Western (Omagh)	111

Support for teachers with pupils with special educational needs

<p>AQW 5370/16- 21</p>	<p>Mrs Rosemary Barton (UUP - Fermanagh and South Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline what support mechanisms and formal guidance is in place for teachers that have pupils with a statement of special educational needs.</p> <p>Schools have the following support mechanisms:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education Authority's Children and Young People's Services Teams <p>These teams provide advice and guidance, on request, from any teacher together with individual advice and guidance for specific pupils through certain referral routes. They also provide training on how to support pupils with Statements of special educational needs (SEN) on request from schools.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Educational Psychology <p>Schools also have a named educational psychologist who facilitates a support mechanism for them to access regarding children with Statements of SEN.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The School SEN Co-ordinator <p>All schools have a SEN Co-ordinator (SENCo) whose responsibility is to ensure that they co-ordinate the day to day</p>
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operation of the SEN Policy in school and to provide advice and support to all staff in school. Through the SEN Policy, the procedures for supporting children at all stages of the SEN Code of Practice (CoP) are outlined and SENCOs ensure that all teachers are familiar with the SEN Policy. The Education Authority (EA) has issued guidance for schools on writing a SEN Policy.

The Department of Education funded Leadership and Management training for SENCOs in 2013-15 and all EASENCOs were offered training which was to support them in their role in school. The training specifically covered the SEN Policy and training on how teachers support pupils at all stages of the CoP, including children with a statement of SEN, in school. The training was designed and delivered by a range of SEN Services, including the Educational Psychology Service.

4. Formal guidance for schools and teachers

There are published documents for schools to support teachers with pupils with SEN, such as: The SEN Code of Practice (1998) and Supplement (2005); The Good Practice Guidelines 2009 (EA); and the SEN Resource File (Department of Education) 2011. These documents provide guidance for teachers in supporting pupils with a range of difficulties at all stages of the CoP, including children with statements of SEN.

Within SENCO training, the SENCOs are made aware of all of the above documents and how they can use them to guide teachers in supporting children with statements of SEN.

Time allocation for special needs assessments

<p>AQW 5012/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Colin McGrath (SDLP - South Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail (i) how many hours are allocated for the assessment of special needs in each of the five Education Authority areas; and (ii) whether there has been any changes to this allocated time over the last five years.</p> <p>Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice Stage 4: The Education Authority (EA) has statutory duties in relation to the conduct of Stage 4 assessments. This includes a requirement that the Educational Psychology Service provide Psychological Advice within 6 weeks of it being requested by EA. There is therefore no system of allocation of hours for the assessment of special needs at Stage 4 of the SEN Code.</p> <p>SEN Code of Practice Stage 3: The Educational Psychology Service also provides advice for non-statutory assessments at stage 3 of the Code of Practice During the current academic year 2016/17 the EA is continuing to progress to a single Educational Psychology Service. A great deal of work has progressed to date and indeed continues to progress, in order to enable a smooth transition from the five local psychology services into one.</p> <p>As part of this transformation, from September 2016 the EA is delivering a common regional model for the allocation of educational psychology services to all primary and post-primary schools.</p> <p>In the interests of equitable access to the Educational Psychology Service, EA allocates Stage 3 service time to all schools through the application of a common formula that takes account of a) school enrolment, b) social deprivation and c) educational achievement. As the legacy Boards had already been implementing a time allocation model of service delivery in primary schools since 2011, for many schools this will entail only</p>
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minor adjustments to the current arrangements: the majority should note little change to their time allocation.

Number of children homeschooled

AQW 4223/16- 21	Mr Steven Agnew (GPNI - North Down)	<p>To ask the Minister of Education (i) to detail the number of children homeschooled in each of the last five years; and (ii) for his assessment of any increase.</p> <p>The number of children registered with the Education Authority(EA) as being home educated in each of the last 5 years is as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="539 929 1401 1099"> <thead> <tr> <th>2011/12</th> <th>2012/13</th> <th>2013/14</th> <th>2014/15</th> <th>2015/16</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>197</td> <td>213</td> <td>249</td> <td>268</td> <td>343</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The actual number of children home educated in each year may be higher as parents are only required to notify the EA if their child has previously attended school or has a statement of special educational needs.</p> <p>Parents may choose what they consider to be the most appropriate educational setting for their child and that can include being home schooled; however, the number of children being educated at home has remained relatively low over the last five years.</p>	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	197	213	249	268	343
2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16								
197	213	249	268	343								

Policy on referring 3 yr olds to special needs schools

<p>AQW 3447/16- 21</p>	<p>Lord Morrow of Clogher Valley (DUP - Fermanagh and South Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline why the Education Authority has changed the policy on referring three-year-old children for places at special needs schools, even when the school in question has available capacity.</p> <p>The Education Authority (EA) will allocate places in pre-school provision in special schools based on complexity of need, and the statutory special educational needs framework for assessment will apply.</p> <p>The EA's priority in September 2016 was to place children in early years' special school classes for whom this was deemed to be appropriate. In addition, the Authority is aware that there are pre-school children who are not yet in their penultimate school year who are also requesting a nursery place.</p> <p>These younger children have historically been placed after children in their penultimate school year have been placed, and this continues to be the case. However, given the significance of placing children in a special school, the EA is requesting that these younger children are placed after their statutory assessment has been completed. This means that the children will be placed, in many cases, during the 2016/17 year. Previously, some children had been accessing early years' placements in special schools even though a statutory assessment had not commenced.</p>
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Overview of psychiatric mental health provision at Woodlands juvenile Justice Centre

<p>AQW 5656/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Paul Frew (DUP - North Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Justice to provide an overview of psychiatric mental health provision within Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre, including number of staff involved in delivering that provision.</p> <p>The South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust provides a dedicated in-reach Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) to young people resident in Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre in line with similar CAMHS services delivered within the community.</p> <p>This dedicated in-reach service, which is part-funded by the Youth Justice Agency, is based in Woodlands and has been operational since November 2015. It provides a comprehensive, multidisciplinary and age-appropriate mental health assessment and treatment service comprising the following specialisms: Locum Consultant Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist Mental Health Clinical Nurse Specialist Forensic/Clinical Psychologists</p> <p>The Team is available during office hours but does not have an emergency/on-call service provision as part of its remit. Out-of-hours emergencies are managed via the local on-call GP service, local Accident and Emergency Departments and local community CAMHS Crisis Assessment and Intervention Team (CAIT) services.</p>
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