

NICCY Summary: Written Assembly Questions weeks ending 16 December 2016

Historic abuse in sporting organisations

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| <p>AQW 8364/16- 21</p> | <p>Mr Richie McPhillips (SDLP - Fermanagh and South Tyrone)</p> | <p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether her Department is aware of any historical abuse that occurred in sporting organisations.</p> <p>Cases of abuse that occurred in sporting organisations fall outside the Terms of Reference of the current Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry and the Executive Office is not aware of any current or historical abuse cases of this nature.</p> <p>The statutory framework requires that child abuse must be reported immediately to PSNI and Social Services for investigation.</p> <p>Anyone who has information on child abuse should report it immediately so it can be investigated and steps taken to protect children and where appropriate alleged perpetrators brought before the courts.</p> |
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Update on Together: Building a United Community headline actions

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| <p>AQO 576/16- 21</p> | <p>Mr John O'Dowd (SF - Upper Bann)</p> | <p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Together: Building a United Community headline actions.</p> <p>The Together: Building a United Community Strategy committed to the delivery of seven headline actions across a wide range of areas, and there has been considerable progress in their delivery. For example the Summer Camps programme delivered 101 camps in 2015/16. The programme has been mainstreamed with a further</p> |
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103 camps being delivered in 2016/17. Over 4000 young people have taken part in the Summer Camp Programme in each of the two years.

The initial phase of the United Youth Programme, involving over 300 young people, concluded on 31 March 2016. The findings from the evaluation have been very positive. A key element of the United Youth Programme, “Youth Initiative” was identified and agreed by SEUPB as falling within the eligibility of the Peace IV funding. Extensive funding has been secured by the Executive to deliver the United Youth Programme in the form of a cross-border programme with the Irish Government under PEACE IV Children and Young People Priority 2.1. The call for applications for this Priority launched on 3 November 2016 with a closing date of 4 January 2017. Projects are scheduled to be approved at the end of July 2017, with implementation to begin in August 2017. Three Shared Neighbourhoods have been completed to date - Ballynafoy Close in Belfast; Manse Court in Saintfield; and Felden Mill in Newtownabbey with another scheme in Cookstown nearing completion. The remaining six schemes are underway.

The first call for expressions of interest in the Shared Education Campuses Programme resulted in 3 projects being supported. A further two projects have been successful under the second call for applications and a third call for applications to the programme was announced on 20 September 2016. The deadline for submission of proposals under this third call is 27 January 2017.

We launched Strategic Frameworks for each Urban Village area at events in Derry~Londonderry and Belfast in September 2016 where we also announced £45 million of planned capital investment over the next PfG period to help transform the physical environment in UV areas; build capacity for the local community; and foster positive community identities. These frameworks identify

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| | | <p>key strategic actions in each UV area and have been shaped by local communities.</p> <p>The number of barriers has been reduced from 59 to 50 with sections of four other structures removed. The launch of the removal of the first NIHE Peace Wall took place on 11 August 2016. It has now been replaced by a family friendly landscaped area and railings with decorative panels, which local residents helped to design.</p> <p>Two phases of the Cross Community Youth Sports Programme have been successfully delivered in Falls and Greater Village. The 2016/2017 Embedding Sustainability programme in these areas seeks to build upon the skills, leadership and confidence of the young people on the programme to empower them to design and deliver projects within their own communities. The programme has also been linked to the Strategic Frameworks for Colin and Eastside Urban Village areas. Stakeholder engagement has progressed well in both these areas and a wide range of community, youth and sporting organisations have been informed and engaged. A pilot programme commenced in Lisnaskea at the end of July 2016 and a range of key activities and events for participants will roll out January-March 2017.</p> |
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Update on Fresh Start Agreement

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| <p>AQO 575/16- 21</p> | <p>Mr Sydney Anderson (DUP - Upper Bann)</p> | <p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the progress of the Fresh Start Agreement.</p> <p>Since the last Fresh Start progress report on 29 June we have continued to make good progress on delivering on our commitments.</p> <p>The Executive published its action plan on tackling paramilitary activity, criminality and organised crime on 19 July. Work is</p> |
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| | | <p>underway to take forward a number of measures this year and to develop programmes for future years.</p> <p>The UK and Irish Governments signed a treaty on 13 September to establish the Independent Reporting Commission. The aim is to have the Commission in place by the end of 2016.</p> <p>The OECD report was launched on 6 July following Executive agreement. Recommendations from the report are to be included in Programme for Government delivery plans. In the recent monitoring round we agreed the allocation of £30m of RRI borrowing as part of an Economic Stimulus package to fund capital allocations of £25m for Roads Structural Maintenance and the purchase of new buses and £5m for a Community Regeneration Fund.</p> <p>A number of projects to support shared and integrated education have also been agreed with the UK Government providing for access to £3.5m of additional Capital DEL funding this year. The Commission for Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition has met five times since it was established on 20 June and has recently begun a period of public and sectoral engagement. The Bill to reduce the number of MLAs to five per constituency received Royal Assent on 22 July.</p> <p>We will also be finalising the membership of the Civic Advisory Panel shortly.</p> |
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Service charges the Child Maintenance Service

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| <p>AQW 8808/16- 21</p> | <p>Mr Chris Lyttle (APNI - East Belfast)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister for Communities to detail the service charges the Child Maintenance Service applies to monies collected from paying parents.</p> <p>As part of our programme to reform Child Maintenance, we</p> |
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| | | <p>introduced collection and enforcement charges in August 2014 to encourage parents to take greater financial responsibility for their children.</p> <p>The collection charge for paying parents is 20% of the child maintenance liability and this is added to each payment the Child Maintenance Service has to collect from a paying parent.</p> <p>In addition, if enforcement action is necessary, the following one-off charges are applied:</p> <p>£300 if the Child Maintenance Service has to apply for a Liability Order.</p> <p>£200 if the Child Maintenance Service take out a Lump Sum Deduction Order.</p> <p>£50 if the Child Maintenance Service take out a Regular Deduction Order.</p> <p>£50 if the Child Maintenance Service has to make a Deduction from Earnings Order.</p> <p>However clients on the new Statutory Scheme can avoid all charges by using the 'Direct Payment' option provided by the Child Maintenance Service. I am pleased that over 65% of clients are currently making use of this facility and avoiding all charges entirely</p> |
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Creation of an advice portal for families with children and young people with disabilities

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| <p>AQW 8707/16- 21</p> | <p>Ms Carla Lockhart (DUP - Upper Bann)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister for Communities for her assessment on the creation of an advice portal for families with children and young people with disabilities, to advise them of the benefits and financial help available.</p> <p>The Department's strategy for the provision of generalist advice across seeks to ensure that good quality advice services are available to those who need them, that such services are readily available and to increasing and promoting the use of high quality digital and telephony services as key delivery</p> |
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| | | <p>channels.</p> <p>In 2016/17 the Department allocated £1.6M to councils to support frontline independent advice services across Northern Ireland. The eleven local councils provided an additional £1.9M. This joint funding supports face to face, telephone and online advice services for families, including those with children and young people with disabilities, on a wide range of issues including benefits. In September 2016 I announced further funding of £2.5M to provide face to face and telephone services to advise and support people affected by welfare changes.</p> <p>NI Direct provides online information about benefits and other sources of financial help or support for citizens. NI Direct is updated regularly to ensure the information available is current. My officials engage with councils and the advice sector to ensure that the services provided meet the needs of clients. The Department has no plans for a portal for a specific group.</p> |
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Public transport concessions for children with special needs

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| <p>AQW 8430/16- 21</p> | <p>Ms Paula Bradley (DUP - North Belfast)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister for Infrastructure what concessions are in place in respect of public transport for (i) children with special needs; and (ii) their accompanying carers.</p> <p>Translink offers half fare travel for all children and young people up until the 30 June following their 16th Birthday.</p> <p>In addition, the Concessionary Fares Scheme offers half fare travel to individuals who have a learning disability.</p> <p>While I am sympathetic to extending the Concessionary Fares Scheme to accompanying carers, the position is that there are already numerous competing priorities for resources across my</p> |
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department and as such any extension to the concessionary fares scheme cannot be considered at this time.

Update on the future plans for Fleming Fulton School

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| <p>AQW 8719/16- 21</p> | <p>Mr Andy Allen (UUP - East Belfast)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Education for an update on the future plans for Fleming Fulton School. [Priority Written]</p> <p>The Education Authority (EA) consultation on the “Providing Pathways” draft strategic Area Plan for Northern Ireland closed on 12 December 2016.</p> <p>The draft Area Plan took cognisance of the recommendations from the Ministerial Review of Special Schools Provision in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The EA will now consider consultee responses, finalise the Area Plan and present an Annual Action Plan to me in the New Year.</p> <p>The EA, as Managing Authority for Fleming Fulton School, has confirmed their intention to engage with the Board of Governors of Fleming Fulton School in early 2017.</p> |
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Schools action in relation to suicide prevention and mental health awareness

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| <p>AQW 8691/16- 21</p> | <p>Ms Carla Lockhart (DUP - Upper Bann)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Education for an update on that action being taken by schools in relation to (i) suicide prevention; and (ii) raising awareness of mental health.</p> <p>My reply to your previous question (AQW 6202/16-21 refers) outlined the actions taken by DE to help schools to respond appropriately to pupils who may present with suicide ideation or other mental health concerns.</p> <p>Boards of Governors have a statutory responsibility to safeguard</p> |
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| | | <p>and promote the welfare of all pupils attending the school and it is a matter for each individual school to incorporate guidance provided by the Department into their child protection policy. Teachers should continue to refer any concerns to the school designated teacher (DT) or deputy designated teacher (DDT) for child protection who have received specific training to perform this role. DT's/DDT's may respond in different ways depending upon the needs of their pupils and may avail of the service provided by the Education Authority Child Protection Support Service for Schools (CPSSS) or other statutory and voluntary agencies.</p> |
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Addressing increasing cost of breakfast clubs, afterschool clubs and summer schemes

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| <p><u>AQW</u> <u>8452/16-</u> <u>21</u></p> | <p>Mrs Rosemary Barton (UUP - <i>Fermanagh and South Tyrone</i>)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Education how he will address the increasing cost of (i) breakfast clubs; (ii) afterschool clubs; and (iii) summer schemes.</p> <p>The affordability of childcare has been recognised as a key issue for families during the development of the Childcare Strategy. The first phase of the Strategy led to the establishment of the Bright Start School Age Childcare (SAC) Grant Scheme, which financially supports low cost childcare places and has, to date, supported some 3,000 low cost childcare places across Northern Ireland, of which around 1,500 are in rural areas.</p> <p>At a local level the Childcare Partnerships (CCPs) have a role in identifying the need for childcare services in their respective areas, which should enable them to build a comprehensive picture of supply and demand in local areas. The CCPs have also acted as the Managing Agents in delivering the SAC Grant Scheme and offer information and support to childcare providers, parents and employers. The CCPs aim is to</p> |
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increase the number of childcare places and to ensure high quality affordable childcare for parents across Northern Ireland.

The first phase of the Childcare Strategy has sought to promote and encourage uptake of financial assistance available to help parents meet the costs of childcare, principally, childcare vouchers and the childcare element of Working Families' Tax Credit. This is something I hope to build on in the future as HMRC introduces the Tax-Free Childcare scheme.

I am aware of the recent report 'Northern Ireland Childcare Cost Survey 2016', issued by Employers for Childcare, which highlighted a number of issues with the costs of childcare including the cost variations across areas, different types of settings and for different services such as summer schemes, breakfast clubs and afterschool clubs.

The forthcoming Childcare Strategy will seek to address accessibility and affordability issues. I hope to bring forward the full version of the Childcare Strategy to my Executive colleagues in the coming months, having taken account of the many consultation responses received, the Programme for Government and the new opportunities that now exist to align childcare and Early Years initiatives. The Childcare Strategy, when agreed by the Executive, may include further opportunities for a wider range of childcare provision to be supported.

Support to families of children with autism

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| <p>AQW 8437/16- 21</p> | <p>Mrs Sandra Overend (UUP - Mid Ulster)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Education how his Department provides support (i) to families of children with autism; and (ii) to specific groups that support those parents.</p> <p>The Education Authority, through the autism advisory and intervention service and the Middletown Centre for Autism, and in collaboration with local health trusts, provides a range of support services for children with autism, their families and specific groups that support parents. Support for families includes training programmes and workshops which are provided at various times and in various locations throughout the regions to accommodate, where possible, parental preferences. Topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Autism awareness Appropriate and effective home interventions Autism and relationships Study skills Social Skills Transition to post-primary school Sensory processing difficulties Personal independence skills Life Skills and transition to adulthood <p>Targeted support and advice may also be provided to parents. The autism advisory and intervention service also provides autism-specific training and advice to local support groups such as voluntary organisations, youth centres, leisure centres and sporting organisations.</p> <p>In addition, my Department provides funding to MCA, which has enabled it to expand its programme of direct support and intervention to children with complex autism who are referred by the Education Authority; and to provide professional and parental training, and research services.</p> |
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Provisions allowing pupils over 16 to withdraw from religious or collective worship

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| <p>AQW 8397/16- 21</p> | <p>Ms Paula Bradshaw (APNI - South Belfast)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Education whether he has any plans to bring provisions allowing pupils over 16 to choose to withdraw from religious or collective worship in line with the rest of the United Kingdom.</p> <p>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. Parental consent is required for a pupil to withdraw from religious education or collective worship, or from both, and I have no plans to change this.</p> |
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Allocation of Fresh Start Agreement funding for school maintenance

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| <p>AQW 8377/16- 21</p> | <p>Ms Kellie Armstrong (APNI - Strangford)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Education for an update on his discussions with the Secretary of State in relation to allowing the allocation of Fresh Start Agreement money for the maintenance of schools.</p> <p>The first tranche of Fresh Start funding, announced in March 16, is for the provision of new schools in the shared and integrated education sectors. My most recent discussions with the Secretary of State have been in relation to maximising the impact of the funding going forward.</p> <p>There are no proposals to apply Fresh Start funding to school maintenance activities. Maintenance is funded from the resource budget; the Fresh Start funding available is in the form of capital and would not therefore be applicable to maintenance activities.</p> <p>Maintenance of schools in the Controlled, Voluntary Maintained and Irish Medium sectors is the responsibility of the Education Authority (EA), while maintenance of schools in</p> |
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| | | the Voluntary Grammar and Grant Maintained Integrated (GMI) sectors is the direct responsibility of the schools themselves. |
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Rural proofing to prevent rural school pupils with SEN being adversely impacted

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| <p>AQW 8375/16- 21</p> | <p>Ms Kellie Armstrong (APNI - Strangford)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Education what rural proofing has been carried out for rural schools so pupils with Special Educational Needs will not be impacted adversely.</p> <p>My officials sought clarification on the question and I understand that rural proofing was in regards to looking at special educational needs provision and the transport that is provided.</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 under legislation for identifying, assessing and making provision for children with SEN. Support for pupils with SEN is based on the individual needs of the child.</p> <p>Where the Education Authority maintains a statement of special educational needs for a pupil, the decision about where a child is placed, including whether they should be provided with transport assistance will be considered as part of the statementing process.</p> <p>Where a specific need for transport assistance is identified as part of this process, transport assistance will be provided. Where a specific need for transport is not identified as part of this process, or where a child does not have a statement of SEN, normal eligibility rules apply.</p> <p>The SEN policy and legislative framework, supported by a</p> |
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| | | statutory code of practice provides access to special educational provision and supports, in exactly the same way to children in rural areas as it does to those in urban areas. |
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Appeals process for SEN statementing

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| <p>AQW 8374/16 -21</p> | <p>Ms Kellie Armstrong</p> <p>(APNI - Strangford)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail the appeals process for Special Educational Needs statementing.</p> <p>The formal appeals process for Special Educational Needs statementing is set in special education legislation, and gives parents the right, under certain circumstances, to appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST) about Education Authority (EA) decisions on SEN provision during the assessment and statementing process.</p> <p>The Northern Ireland Courts Service and Tribunal Service is responsible for the SENDIST. An appeal to the Tribunal must be made within two months of any disputed decision and may be made by application to the Tribunal in writing to 2nd Floor, Royal Courts of Justice, Chichester Street, Belfast BT1 3JF, by telephone at 0300 200 7812 or by Email at tribunalsunit@courtsni.gov.uk.</p> <p>Guidance for parents can be found in “The Special Education Needs and Disability Tribunal – “How To Appeal” booklet which is provided by SENDIST and can be found on its website: https://www.courtsni.gov.uk/en-GB/Tribunals/SpecialEduNeedsnDisability/Documents/SENDIST-How-to-Appeal.pdf</p> <p>The Education Authority also offers an informal route for dispute resolution in regard to provision being made for children with Special Educational Needs. The Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS) provides an</p> |
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| | | <p>opportunity to resolve areas of disagreement between parents and schools and/or the EA. The DARS is an independent, confidential and informal service designed to provide an opportunity for identifying points of disagreement and finding ways forward that all parties are willing to accept. There is a DARS contact in the EA offices, independent of its Special Education section.</p> <p>Lodging an appeal to the Tribunal does not prevent a parent from making a referral to DARS and vice versa.</p> |
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Funding for classroom assistants for children with SEN

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| <p>AQW 8310/16- 21</p> | <p>Mr Cathal Boylan (SF - Newry and Armagh)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Education what funding is available for classroom assistants for children with Special Educational Needs in (i) private; and (ii) public pre-schools.</p> <p>It is the Education Authority (EA), through the statutory assessment process, that determines if a child will require a formal statement. The statement will identify the child's individual needs and the range of provision to be made, including provision of a classroom assistant, if required.</p> <p>The Education Authority which is the funding authority for controlled and maintained schools and the Department which is the funding authority for Voluntary Grammar and Grant Maintained Integrated schools provide funding for classroom assistance support, if this is detailed in a child's statement of special educational needs.</p> <p>Should the EA determine that a private nursery setting is an appropriate placement for a child with a statement of SEN, the EA will provide funding for classroom assistance support, if this is detailed in the child's statement.</p> |
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| | | <p>Nurseries and pre-school settings may appoint additional staff from their own budgets to support children with SEN. Some nurseries and pre-school settings can also access short term targeted support from classroom assistants attached to the SEN early years inclusion service or other EA funded SEN services.</p> |
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How youth clubs are governed

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| <p>AQW 7915/16- 21</p> | <p>Mr Richie McPhillips (SDLP - Fermanagh and South Tyrone)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline how youth clubs are governed by (i) his Department; (ii) the Education Authority; and (iii) the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools.</p> <p>As set out in Article 37 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 the Education Authority (EA) has responsibility for the provision of adequate facilities for recreational, social, physical, cultural and youth service activities. Therefore, the planning, funding and delivery of youth work is based on the EA assessment of the needs of young people aligned to the Department's priorities as set out in 'Priorities for Youth'. The Department does not directly fund youth clubs and is not the employer of youth workers in EA funded youth clubs. The EA has advised that Voluntary youth clubs are governed by Management Committees and, in order to be a registered group and receive funding, youth clubs have to demonstrate good governance to the Education Authority (EA) in terms of constitution, policies, procedures, compliance, internal controls, insurance, finance, and management of staff and volunteers.</p> <p>In the controlled sector youth clubs are managed by a Youth Worker-in-Charge, reporting to the Area Youth Officer or his/her delegate. Controlled Youth clubs normally have an Advisory Committee which provides advice to support the</p> |
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| | | <p>development and implementation of the youth club programme and the use of club funds. Youth Clubs in schools are governed by the Board of Governors of the school.</p> <p>The EA youth service does not have a direct governance relationship with CCMS about youth clubs in maintained schools.</p> <p>As part of the 2016-17 Regional Youth Development Plan, the EA has established a Practice Development Group including stakeholders to consider the training requirements of the EA funded youth sector to strengthen governance and accountability arrangements. This will include the provision of advice on governance, legal and regulatory requirements.</p> |
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Time allocated to schools for Educational Psychologists

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| <p>AQW 6800/16- 21</p> | <p>Mr Ross Hussey (UUP - West Tyrone)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Education how many children were not assessed because the school had used their allocation of time for the Educational Psychologist as given by the Education Authority for each of the last five years.</p> <p>The allocation of time from the Education Psychologist to the school is the guaranteed minimum time for stage 3 assessments. In cases where a school has a serious concern and has used their time allocation the Education Psychologist Service (EPS) will still endeavour to arrange for the child to be assessed. Statutory work is also provided over and above the allocation. Information on the number of children not assessed in any given year would only be held by individual schools.</p> |
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Number of children assessed for special educational need

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| <p><u>AQW</u> <u>6798/16-</u> <u>21</u></p> | <p>Mr Ross Hussey (UUP - West Tyrone)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Education how many children were assessed for special educational need for each of the last five years.</p> <p>Given your reference to allocation of time from Education Psychologists to schools in AQW 6800/16-21, the Department is interpreting this question as relating to assessments at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.</p> <p>The Education Authority (EA) has advised that recent changes to its Education Management System appear to be impacting on the accuracy/robustness of reports being generated. As such, the EA is unable, at present, to provide the information requested. The Authority has confirmed that it is endeavouring to rectify the situation and that it expects to have the information available at a future date.</p> <p>I will write to the Member when the information is received from the EA.</p> |
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Referrals to educational psychologists for SEN assessment

| | AQW 5327/ 16-21 | Mrs Sandr a Over end (UUP - Mid Ulster) | <p>To ask the Minister of Education how many referrals to educational psychologists have been made as part of the special educational needs statutory assessment process in each year since 2010.</p> <p>The Education Authority will make referrals to educational psychologists for advice as part of the statutory assessment process at Stage 4 of the Code of Practice and may also make such referrals as part of the statutory annual review of statements. The numbers of referrals are as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="491 884 1442 1451"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2010 /11</th> <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>Stage 4 Stat utory Advice</td> <td>1861</td> <td>2062</td> <td>2372</td> <td>2558</td> <td>2574</td> <td>2329</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Statut ory Revie w</td> <td>1496</td> <td>1552</td> <td>1674</td> <td>1487</td> <td>1795</td> <td>1963</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | 2010 /11 | 2011 /12 | 2012 /13 | 2013 /14 | 2014 /15 | 2015 /16 | Stage 4 Stat utory Advice | 1861 | 2062 | 2372 | 2558 | 2574 | 2329 | Statut ory Revie w | 1496 | 1552 | 1674 | 1487 | 1795 | 1963 |
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Funding for tackling paramilitary activity

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| <p>AQW 8560/16- 21</p> | <p>Mr David Ford (APNI - South Antrim)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Finance further to his written statement to the Assembly, Fresh Start – 2016, what processes are in place to reach agreement between the Executive and the UK Government to access the potential funding earmarked for Tackling Paramilitary Activity for 2018-19 onwards.</p> <p>The British Government committed in the Fresh Start Agreement to providing £25 million of additional funding over five years to tackle continuing paramilitary activity. The Chief Secretary to the Treasury has now advised that some £5 million/ £5 million/ £7.5 million /£7.5million will be available from 2018-19 onwards. Discussions will be had with Treasury/NIO should the actual requirements differ from this.</p> |
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Support for people who are feeling suicidal

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| <p>AQW 8687/16- 21</p> | <p>Ms Carla Lockhart (DUP - Upper Bann)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Health what statutory assistance is available for people who are feeling suicidal; and what projects and groups her Department is funding in the voluntary sector to try and assist with preventing suicide.</p> <p>My Department allocates over £7m annually to suicide prevention. The Public Health Agency manages the implementation of the Protect Life suicide prevention strategy and allocation of this budget.</p> <p>A range of self-harm and suicide prevention services are provided regionally. These include: Lifeline 24/7 helpline and associated support services; the Self Harm Intervention Programme; Card Before You Leave; RAID pilot scheme in the Northern Trust; bereavement support; mental health services; psychological therapies; public information campaigns; and training on suicide/mental health awareness;</p> |
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| | | <p>work with the arts sector; family and individual outreach support; and counselling and complementary therapies.</p> <p>To date in 2016-17, the Public Health Agency has invested in 95 projects/activities through 60 different providers. In addition, some 125 small grants have been awarded to various providers through the CLEAR project, and 32 grants directly to Sports Coaches. A full list of the groups funded is available from the PHA.</p> |
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Support for foster families

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| <p>AQW 8462/16- 21</p> | <p>Mr Justin McNulty (SDLP - Newry and Armagh)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Health to detail any capital assistance her Department offers to families that foster children in order to allow them to foster more children.</p> <p>I can confirm that no specific allocation is made via the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) to HSC Trusts to extend the homes of foster carers to facilitate the placement of children. On occasions, when Trusts have highlighted a specific need relating to the placement of a specific child or sibling group and the HSCB or relevant Trust has been able to identify sufficient funding, allocations have been made for home extensions. This practice has become increasingly difficult in recent years in the context of growing financial pressures.</p> <p>The HSCB does not currently collect data on the number of home extensions</p> |
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Update on action in Health and Wellbeing 2026

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| <p>AQW 7588/16- 21</p> | <p>Mr Robbie Butler (UUP - Lagan Valley)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Health for an update on each action contained in Health and Wellbeing 2026 – Delivering Together.</p> <p>Delivering Together sets out 18 actions to be taken forward over the next 12 months.</p> <p>Progress has been made in bringing forward all actions to ensure full implementation within the timeframe. I have announced the transformation oversight structures and already commenced a series of engagement with stakeholders. Additionally, the consultation on the criteria proposed by the Expert Panel for the reconfiguration of Health and Social Care services has begun and will run until 20 January 2017.</p> <p>I have committed to bringing progress reports to the Assembly every six months.</p> |
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Out of hours service for children and young people with addiction and mental health problems

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| | <p>AQW 7415/ 16-21</p> | <p>Ms Nich ola Mall on (SD LP - Nort h Belf ast)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Health to list the out-of-hours services available in each Health and Social Care Trust for (i) children and young people; and (ii) adults with addiction and mental health problems, identified by tier of service.</p> <p>Generally the first points of contact in an out of hours emergency are Emergency Departments or Out of Hours GP Services which can trigger a mental health response if that is assessed as being required. The Regional Emergency Social Work service provides a social work response to emergency situations regarding vulnerable children and their families across the region on an out of hours basis as follows: 5pm to 9am weekdays, and 24 hours at weekends and</p> |
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bank holidays. Trusts have access to regional addiction treatment beds as required. These regional services complement the Trust services detailed at Tables 1 and 2 below.

(i) Out-of-hours services available in each Health and Social Care Trust for children and young people with addiction and mental health problems are detailed in Table 1 below, with tier of service identified where possible.

Table 1

| Trust | Out-of-hours services for Children and Young People |
|-------------------------|---|
| Belfast & South Eastern | A Crisis Assessment and Intervention Team is in place for under 18s in acute mental health crisis 7 days per week 8:00am - 9:00pm for direct same day/next day assessment and intervention and on-call 9:00pm - 8:00am for advice, guidance and direct assessment where clinically indicated. This Team accepts referrals from General Practice, Emergency Departments and Social Services. Belfast Trust has a Consultant Psychiatrist, a Senior Trainee Psychiatrist and a Senior Mental Health Manager on-call at all times out of |

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| | | | | | hours. |
| | | | | Northern | <p>Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team (CRHT), Step 4/5 operates from 9am to 9pm Monday to Friday, Saturday 10am to 2pm and Sunday from 9am to 5pm. Outside these hours, the Rapid Assessment Interface and Discharge service (RAID) see and risk assess all young people. All the young people are seen within a 2 hour timeframe by both CRHT and RAID. RAID work closely with CAMHS and Learning Disability Services to ensure that people who are within these groups are also supported.</p> |
| | | | | Southern | <p>A dedicated CAMHS Team provides an emergency response 9.00am to 7.00pm Monday to Friday and 9.00 am to 5.00pm at weekends and Bank Holidays. Outside of these hours young people presenting to Emergency</p> |

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| | | | | <p>Departments are triaged and seen by Staff Grade and above and if a child safety plan can be agreed they are discharged for CAMHS follow up at 9.00am the following day. If they are not medically fit for discharge or are seen as too vulnerable to discharge they remain in hospital until CAMHS can assess the following morning. Where presentations are complex Medical Staff can liaise directly with the Consultant Psychiatrist on call.</p> | |
| | | | Western | <p>CAMHS, Family and Childcare provides the following services for Children and Young People beyond the 9 to 5 working day arrangements: In cases of low risk, a Card Before You Leave Service is operational across the Trust which provides follow up to young people who present as concerning but at low risk to Emergency Department (EDs). This service is available 365 days per</p> | |

year and staffed by CAMHS clinicians daily. In cases of high risk children or young people who present to EDs, referrals are made to either the Out of Hours Regional Emergency Social Work Services (RESWS) or Trust Out of Hours Adult Mental Health services in cases of psychiatric emergencies. Family Response Service, 24/7 Fostering Service, Childcare senior manager on call.

(ii) The out-of-hours services for adults with addiction and mental health problems in each Health and Social Care Trust are detailed in Table 2 below, with tier of service identified where possible.

Table 2

| Trust | Out-of-hours services for Adults |
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| Belfast | From 5:00pm each day and all day Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays, Mental Health Unscheduled Care provide an urgent/emergency Mental Health Assessment to individuals who are referred by their GP or who present to Emergency Departments and are triaged as requiring an urgent Mental Health Assessment. After 9:00pm this service is provided by Belfast Trust Mental Health @ Night Services. Belfast Trust Home Treatment Team (a clinically-led |

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| | | | | <p>Multidisciplinary Team) provides a 24 hour assessment and treatment service, 7 days a week, for those patients who are acutely unwell and who, in the absence of home treatment, would otherwise be admitted to hospital.</p> |
| | | | North ern | <p>A Crisis Response and Home Treatment service is available 24 hours, bank holidays and weekends. This service accepts referrals from a wide range of referral agents and works very closely with primary care provider, Dalriada Urgent Care, to provide mental health assessment and intervention out of hours to those who present with mental health problems. The Rapid Assessment Interface and Discharge (RAID) service based in both Antrim Area Hospital and Causeway Hospital has Mental Health Practitioners who are available to provide assessment and intervention out of hours (across 24 hours) to those who are admitted or who present with mental health problems. They also work closely with CAMHS and Learning Disability Services to ensure that people who are within these groups are supported.</p> |
| | | | South Easte rn | <p>Tier 3 Emergency Mental Health Response via Trust Mental Health Assessment Centres (based in Lisburn, Ards and Downpatrick) which are open from 9am until 8pm on 7 days per week including Bank Holidays. The Trust Mental Health at Night Service takes over from 7.30 pm (including half hour handover) 7 nights per week and is exclusively an emergency service with the vast majority of referrals coming from Trust Emergency Departments</p> |

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| | | | <p>Home Treatment (HT) is available throughout the Trust with teams based in Lisburn, Ards and Downpatrick. Currently Downpatrick and ArdsHT operates seven days a week and Ards HT is open until 8pm. From January 2017 the service will be available from 0900-2000 seven days a week throughout the Trust.</p> <p>Substance Liaison Service - currently available in acute general hospital sites. The service will be extending its operational times (9am-5pm) to include weekends from the beginning of the New Year.</p> |
| | | South ern | <p>The Southern Trust has a Home Treatment Crisis Response service (Tier 4) that operates 24 hrs a day for patients in mental distress. The service provides urgent mental health assessment and interventions by experienced Mental Health Practitioners to those in acute crisis. The service can be accessed via GP, Out of Hours GP service and Emergency Departments and has a targeted response time of 2 hrs</p> |
| | | West ern | <p>The Adult Mental Health Crisis Response Home Treatment service provides 24/7 crisis assessment and intervention. If a person presents as intoxicated it may be necessary for them to be admitted to an Acute Hospital bed until they are medically fit for an assessment to be carried out. The assessment may be carried out by an alcohol liaison nurse who works within the acute setting Tier 2/3. Alternatively those clients requiring community detox within the Western Trust can be supported through a shared care approach with Tier 3 addictions services working in partnership with local GPs (Tier 3). Individuals with complex alcohol and drug presentation can be</p> |

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| | | | | admitted via a Regional Co-ordinator to Tier 4 detox beds in Omagh. |
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Support for schools to assist with concerns around self harm for pupils

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| <p><u>AQW</u> <u>7212/16-</u> <u>21</u></p> | <p>Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson (UUP - Upper Bann)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Health how each Health and Social Care Trust is providing help and guidance to (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary schools to assist with concerns around self-harm amongst pupils; and what consideration has been given to the drafting of Northern Ireland-wide guidance for schools.</p> <p>The Health and Social Care sector worked in partnership with the Department of Education and others to develop a Pupils Emotional Health and Wellbeing Programme. The iMatter Programme is about addressing how the 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.</p> <p>Suicide prevention guidance for all schools was published in March 2016. It focuses on supporting schools to reduce suicide and self-harm. Additional resources have been developed and issued to all schools in September 2016 (https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/suicide-prevention-guidance). Health and Social Care Trusts participated in the working group which developed this guidance; the group was chaired by my Department. HSC Trusts are not engaged in providing help and guidance to primary schools on self-harm amongst pupils, unless in the context of activation of a community response plan in relation to a potentially emerging suicide cluster in an area.</p> |
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Waiting times for CAMHS

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| <p><u>AQW</u> <u>4864/16-</u> <u>21</u></p> | <p>Mr Robbie Butler (UUP - Lagan Valley)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Health to detail each of the (i) target; and (ii) actual patient waiting times for starting treatment at Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in each of the last five years, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust.</p> <p>Commissioning Plan Direction Target 4.13 states that no patient should wait longer than nine weeks to access Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Waiting times are calculated from the date of acceptance of the referral to the time the patient is seen and assessed at their first appointment.</p> <p>I am firmly of the view that the current waiting lists are unacceptably long. However, unless we tackle the root causes this will remain the case, as we have a 20th century model delivering services for a 21st century population. This is having an increasingly negative impact on the quality and experience of care. The long term solution is the transformation of our health and social care system as outlined in Delivering Together.</p> <p>It is only in transforming the health and social care system and by implementing new models of care that we will be able to alleviate the pressures on our health and social care services, sustain improvements in waiting times and deliver better outcomes for patients.</p> <p>That said, I would pay tribute to the staff across the Health and Social Care sector. Notwithstanding the structural issues, they continue to work incredibly hard and on average deliver 9,000 outpatient appointments, 2,600 inpatient/day case procedures and 31,000 diagnostic tests per week.</p> <p>Figures in Tables 1 – 5, overleaf, detail waiting times for patients at 31 August to access CAMHS in each of the last five years, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust.</p> <p>Table 1</p> |
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| HSC Trust | Waiting time (weeks) at 31 August 2012 ^{1, 2} | | | | Total |
|----------------------------|--|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| | 0 – 3 | >3 – 6 | >6 – 9 | >9 | |
| Belfast | 58 | 45 | 30 | 30 | 163 |
| Northern | 41 | 37 | 29 | 3 | 110 |
| South Eastern ³ | | | | | |
| Southern | 28 | 21 | 5 | 0 | 54 |
| Western | 34 | 37 | 17 | 27 | 115 |
| Total | 161 | 140 | 81 | 60 | 442 |

Source: Health and Social Care Board

1 Waiting times are for CAMHS Step 3 only

2 Due to reporting requirements during this period the Friday closest to month end has been used to supply the above figures

3 Please note that the South Eastern HSC Trust CAMHS waiting times are managed by, and reported under the Belfast HSC Trust.

Table 2

| HSC Trust | Waiting time (weeks) at 31 August 2013 ^{1, 2} | | | | Total |
|-----------|--|--------|--------|----|-------|
| | 0 – 3 | >3 – 6 | >6 – 9 | >9 | |
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|----------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| | | | 9 | | |
| Belfast | 53 | 45 | 26 | 8 | 132 |
| Northern | 59 | 50 | 31 | 37 | 177 |
| South Eastern ³ | | | | | |
| Southern | 22 | 19 | 7 | 0 | 48 |
| Western | 54 | 50 | 30 | 11 | 145 |
| Total | 188 | 164 | 94 | 56 | 502 |

Source: Health and Social Care Board

1 Waiting times are for CAMHS Step 3 only

2 Due to reporting requirements during this period the Friday closest to month end has been used to supply the above figures

3 Please note that the South Eastern HSC Trust CAMHS waiting times are managed by, and reported under the Belfast HSC Trust.

Table 3

| HSC Trust | Waiting time (weeks) at 31 August 2014 ^{1, 2} | | | | Total |
|-----------|--|--------|--------|----|------------|
| | 0 – 3 | >3 – 6 | >6 – 9 | >9 | |
| Belfast | 80 | 35 | 14 | 2 | 131 |
| Northern | 64 | 51 | 34 | 53 | 202 |

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|----------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| South Eastern ³ | | | | | |
| Southern | 31 | 15 | 3 | 0 | 49 |
| Western | 48 | 39 | 10 | 0 | 97 |
| Total | 223 | 140 | 61 | 55 | 479 |

Source: Health and Social Care Board

1 Waiting times are for CAMHS Step 3 only

2 Due to reporting requirements during this period the Friday closest to month end has been used to supply the above figures

3 Please note that the South Eastern HSC Trust CAMHS waiting times are managed by, and reported under the Belfast HSC Trust.

Table 4

| HSC Trust | Waiting time (weeks) at 31 August 2015 ¹ | | | | Total |
|----------------------------|---|--------|--------|----|------------|
| | 0 – 3 | >3 – 6 | >6 – 9 | >9 | |
| Belfast | 66 | 42 | 13 | 0 | 121 |
| Northern | 35 | 22 | 16 | 20 | 93 |
| South Eastern ² | | | | | |
| Southern | 19 | 9 | 3 | 0 | 31 |

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|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Western | 48 | 51 | 35 | 60 | 194 |
| Total | 168 | 124 | 67 | 80 | 439 |

Source: Health and Social Care Board

1 Waiting times are for CAMHS Step 3 only

2 Please note that the South Eastern HSC Trust CAMHS waiting times are managed by, and reported under the Belfast HSC Trust.

Table 5

| HSC Trust | Waiting time (weeks) at 31 August 20161 | | | | Total |
|----------------|---|------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| | 0 – 3 | >3 – 6 | >6 – 9 | >9 | |
| Belfast | 98 | 64 | 35 | 58 | 255 |
| Northern | 33 | 21 | 3 | 0 | 57 |
| South Eastern2 | | | | | |
| Southern | 26 | 16 | 4 | 0 | 46 |
| Western | 39 | 40 | 41 | 72 | 192 |
| Total | 196 | 141 | 83 | 130 | 550 |

Source: Health and Social Care Board

1 Waiting times are for CAMHS Step 3 only

2 Please note that the South Eastern HSC Trust CAMHS waiting Times are managed by, and reported under the Belfast HSC Trust.

Number of cases in youth courts

| <p><u>AQW</u> <u>8347/16-</u> <u>21</u></p> | <p>Mr Roy Beggs (UUP - East Antrim)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Justice to detail the number of cases presented to youth courts, over each of the past three years.</p> <p>The number of defendants received in the Magistrates' Youth Courts in each of the last three years is presented in table below.</p> <p>Number of defendants received in the Magistrates' Youth Courts: 2013 to 2015</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="671 842 1286 1014"> <thead> <tr> <th>2013</th> <th>2014</th> <th>2015</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2,241</td> <td>2,035</td> <td>1,780</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Source: Integrated Court Operations System</p> | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2,241 | 2,035 | 1,780 |
|---|---|---|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | | | | | | |
| 2,241 | 2,035 | 1,780 | | | | | | |

Action against an adult who causes a child to commit an offence

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| <p>AQW 8328/16- 21</p> | <p>Lord Morrow of Clogher Valley (DUP - Fermanagh and South Tyrone)</p> | <p>To ask the Minister of Justice whether a specific offence exists or what action can be taken against an adult that uses (i) a child up to 10 years old; and/or (ii) a youth between 11 and 18 years old, to commit a criminal offence.</p> <p>There is no specific offence of an adult using someone under the age 18 to commit a criminal offence. In some circumstances an offence of aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring the offence may be committed by the adult who uses a child to commit a criminal offence.</p> |
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Plans to introduce a Youth Assembly

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| <p><u>AQW</u> <u>8292/16-</u> <u>21</u></p> | <p>Mrs Rosemary Barton (UUP - <i>Fermanagh and South Tyrone</i>)</p> | <p>To ask the Assembly Commission whether there are any plans to introduce a Youth Assembly, similar to the UK Youth Parliament.</p> <p>In 2010 a Youth Panel of thirty 16 to 18 year olds was recruited to develop proposals for a Youth Assembly. Following a year of research and consultation the Youth Panel presented its proposals to the Assembly Commission. To date, funds have not been available to implement these proposals.</p> <p>Nonetheless the Assembly Commission remains committed to engaging with young people. The Education Service continues to work with schools and the youth sector to increase young people’s understanding of the work of the Assembly and to encourage engagement in the democratic process. The Assembly Commission’s Engagement Strategy 2015-16 included a commitment to “build partnerships with relevant stakeholders to create and improve engagement opportunities with citizens and under-represented groups”. To this end the Education Service collaborated with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum to organise a debate involving 100 young people, which was held in the Assembly Chamber on 25th November 2015 and chaired by the then Speaker. The Education Service also works closely with Assembly Committees at every opportunity to consult with young people about inquiry issues and legislation. For example the Education Service is currently working alongside the Education Committee to gather the opinions of young people on the subject of the upcoming Departmental “Children and young people’s strategy” and the Committee’s inquiry into educational underachievement.</p> |
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| | | <p>The Assembly Commission is committed to “building partnerships with relevant stakeholders to create and improve engagement opportunities with citizens and under-represented groups”. The Assembly Commission will consider all options to engage with young people including a Youth Assembly in 2017.</p> |
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