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Office of First and Deputy First Minister

Play and Leisure Programme

Mr Oliver McMullan (Sinn Féin – East Antrim) - To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister who can apply for funding from the Play and Leisure Programme; and to detail the criteria that must be met.

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Play and Leisure Signature Programme is the seventh Delivering Social Change signature programme and is expected to support new play and leisure opportunities for children and young people. It is proposed that the signature programme will support new sustainable opportunities for play; raise awareness of the importance of play and ensure play is considered in the provision of local services. The programme is not open to applications for funding. Details of the scheme will be outlined in due course. **(17th February)**

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Department of Education

Special Education Needs Inspections

Lord Morrow of Clogher Valley (DUP – Fermanagh and South Tyrone) - To ask the Minister of Education what is the required number of Special Education Needs inspections at mainstream post-primary schools during each school year.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): The Education and Training Inspectorate inspect special educational needs as part of all mainstream post-primary inspections. The number of post-primary inspections undertaken each year is linked to the business planning cycle in that particular year. For example:

- by the end of the current academic year 28 post-primary schools should have been inspected;
- in 2013-14, 29 were inspected; and
- in 2012-13, 28 were inspected.

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Unique Learner Number

Ms Claire Sugden (IND – East Londonderry) - To ask the Minister of Education for an update on the adoption of a Unique Learner Number as part of the development of a system to track student progress, particularly those at risk of not being in education, employment or training.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): My Department is working on the introduction of a Unique Learner Number (ULN) for all learners in the north of Ireland at Year 11 and above. In taking forward this work, the Department established a pilot exercise involving up to 25 post-primary schools during 2013/14. This pilot was subsequently extended to 2014/15 to allow for IT developments and to optimise participation from schools.

Progress to date has been positive and the outcomes of the pilot are being evaluated to help inform decisions on the full roll out of the ULN across all schools here.

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Special Education Needs Stages

Lord Morrow of Clogher Valley (DUP – Fermanagh and South Tyrone) - To ask the Minister of Education how many pupils in the mainstream Southern Education and Library Board division are within each of the five Special Educational Needs stages; and of these, how many have a classroom assistant, shown per stage.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): The number of pupils in mainstream schools in the Southern Education and Library Board area at each stage of the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs and the number of those who had access to classroom assistance specified in their statement of special educational needs, as at 11 October 2013, is as follows:

	Number of Pupils	Number with a Classroom Assistant
Stage 1	2,190	0
Stage 2	4,704	0
Stage 3	2,182	0
Stage 4	195	0
Stage 5	2,960	1989
TOTAL	12,231	1989

Sources: NI school census 2013/14 and Southern Education and Library Board.

While the 2014/15 school census took place on the 10th October 2014, finalised figures for SEN will not be available until late February 2015. **(17th February)**

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Scholarships

Mr Chris Hazzard (Sinn Féin – South Down) - To ask the Minister of Education whether his Department offers any scholarships for young people advancing to tertiary education.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): My Department does not offer any direct scholarships for young people advancing to tertiary education.

However my Department promotes and facilitates the All Ireland Scholarship Scheme which is funded by JP McManus and administered by the Department for Employment and Learning. The scheme provides financial support of £5,500 per annum to 25 high achieving students from challenging economic backgrounds for the duration of their undergraduate degree courses. Applicants to the scheme must be in receipt of the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA). **(17th February)**

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Educational Inequalities

Mr Chris Hazzard (Sinn Fein – South Down) - To ask the Minister of Education what actions his Department has taken in recent years to (i) identify; and (ii) tackle educational inequalities.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): The Department’s evidence, based on a census of all schools/pupils, confirms that social deprivation, as measured by Free School Meals, is strongly correlated with and reflective of educational disadvantage and lower educational attainment. This is very much in line with international evidence which also reports the strong correlation between pupils’ socio-economic background and their outcomes in education.

The evidence shows that pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds have greater obstacles to overcome. Their schools need additional resources to help them do this. That is why I have redistributed school funding to target schools with high numbers of pupils from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and have continued to implement policies and provide funding for a range of additional interventions, with a focus on improving standards and tackling educational underachievement.

However, there are two other key issues. Firstly, a socially balanced education system enables all pupils to perform better. While some schools persist in the use of academic selection, we will be unable to eradicate this social division. Secondly, inequality in outcomes is a societal issue and one that education authorities and schools cannot tackle on their own. The challenge of tackling inequalities, be they educational, health or economic, is one that we all face and success will depend on all stakeholders working together in order to achieve greater equity in our society. **(17th February)**

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Special Education Needs Inspections

Lord Morrow of Clogher Valley (DUP – Fermanagh and South Tyrone) - To ask the Minister of Education how often Special Education Needs inspections are carried out in mainstream post-primary schools in the Southern Education and Library Board.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): The Education and Training Inspectorate inspect special education needs as part of all mainstream post-primary inspections in the Southern Education and Library Board. By the end of the current academic year almost all post-primary schools in the SELB (94%) will have been inspected within seven years of their last inspection (or follow-up inspection). **(17th February)**

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Teacher and Classroom Assistant Training

Mr Phil Flanagan (Sinn Fein – Fermanagh and South Tyrone) - To ask the Minister of Education to detail (i) the training provided to teachers and classroom assistants to deal with homophobic bullying in schools; and (ii) what steps he has taken to improve the current training provision.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): Bullying, for whatever reason and in whatever form, is unacceptable. Tackling bullying is a complex challenge, in which the training of teachers is just one of many necessary responses.

All initial teacher training programmes delivered locally will include training on bullying and many specifically draw on homophobic bullying as a learning example or case study.

In-service teacher training is provided by the Education and Library Boards and focuses on the needs of all children and young people, and is supplemented with school-based advice, on-going telephone guidance, support in relation to specific anti-bullying issues and advice on the content of a school's anti-bullying policy. Priority issues for general in-service training are set annually by the Boards drawing on needs identified by their schools.

My Department funds and is a member of the local Anti Bullying Forum. The Forum promotes an anti-bullying culture in schools and offers training and advice to schools on current best-practice in this area. It also provides awareness raising activities for pupils, highlighting the different forms bullying can take and pointing them towards sources of help and support if they are experiencing bullying. The Forum has produced a resource pack called "Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour" and this has been distributed to every school in the North.

Whilst much of the training provided to teachers and classroom assistants is generic, if a school needs support with specific types of bullying, such as homophobic bullying, both the Education and Library Boards and the Anti-Bullying Forum can signpost them to resources or agencies with specific expertise in that area.

At my request, in late 2013, the Anti-Bullying Forum undertook a review of current anti-bullying provision and practices in our schools. One of the recommendations of that review was that we needed to strengthen our current legislation; and that is one of the drivers behind my Department's current public consultation on new Anti-Bullying legislation and my commitment to legislate for this during the current Assembly mandate.

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Aiming High Programme

Ms Claire Sugden (IND – East Londonderry) - To ask the Minister of Education for his assessment of the Aiming High Programme in England; and whether he would consider a similar programme in order to transform services for children with a disability in Northern Ireland.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): The Aiming High for Disabled Children: Better Support for Families Report, published in 2007, tries to address the needs of disabled children and their families specifically within the English system. The report spans the responsibilities of a number of government departments and local government bodies.

In relation to my responsibilities for supporting the education of pupils with a disability here, I am content that an inclusive environment is promoted in all school settings to ensure that all pupils are valued. The learning needs of a pupil with special educational needs and a disability are addressed through the special educational needs framework and discrimination against pupils on the grounds of disability is prohibited within the Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005 (SENDO). School buildings are also required to be disability compliant as part of SENDO. **(17th February)**

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Outdoor Play Areas

Mr Robin Newton (DUP – East Belfast) - To ask the Minister of Education, pursuant to question AQW 40995/11-15, to detail the planned investment in outdoor play areas in schools for pupils with special needs within the Belfast area over the next three years.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): The Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) and the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB), who have responsibility for Special Schools in the Belfast area, have advised that the process of setting a programme for capital minor works, which would include outdoor play areas, over the next three years, has not yet concluded. Decisions will be dependent on the extent of the allocated budget over this period which has still to be determined. **(17th February)**

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Professional Development Opportunities

Ms Claire Sugden (IND – East Londonderry) - To ask the Minister of Education for his assessment of professional development opportunities currently available for youth work staff.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): The professional development of youth work staff is an operational matter for the Education and Library Boards and the Youth Council. All of the Boards and the Youth Council have an ongoing commitment to support the professional development of staff. **(17th February)**

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Special Needs Appeals and Assessments

Mr Ross Hussey (UUP – West Tyrone) - To ask the Minister of Education to detail (i) how many appeals have been launched against each Education and Library Boards at Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunals; and (ii) how many children have been assessed as having Special Educational Needs in each Education and Library Board in the last five years.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): The Department of Justice has advised that the number of appeals received by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal in the last five financial years is as follows:

Education and Library Boards	Years				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/03	2013/14	2014/15
BELB	*	*	5	6	13
NEELB	22	29	33	54	31
SEELB	24	20	30	33	30
SELB	7	10	16	15	11

WELB	10	19	18	13	13
TOTAL	66	81	102	121	98

The information in respect of the current financial year covers the period 1 April 2014 to 31 January 2015.

*denotes fewer than five pupils suppressed due to potential identification of individual pupils.

The number of children who have been assessed as having special educational needs (SEN) in each Education and Library Board in the last five years is as follows:

Education and Library Boards	Years				
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
BELB	14841	15144	15146	15874	16044
NEELB	11741	12304	13291	13696	14066
SEELB	12391	12883	13170	13888	14489
SELB	11956	12150	12419	12656	13075
WELB	12178	12450	13318	13489	13908
TOTAL	63107	64931	67344	69603	71582

Source: NI school census - data collected in October each year.

While the 2014/15 school census took place on the 10th October 2014, finalised figures for SEN will not be available until late February 2015.

The above figures include all children, in all school settings, at all stages of the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

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Classroom Assistants

Mr Pat Ramsey (SDLP – Foyle) - To ask the Minister of Education to outline the number of Special Educational Needs classrooms assistants employed by each Education and Library Board, in each of the last five years.

Mr O’Dowd (The Minister of Education): The number (headcount) of Special Educational Needs classrooms assistants employed by each Education and Library Board, in each of the last five years, is as follows:

Education and Library Board	Years				
	At 31/8/10	At 31/8/11	At 31/8/12	At 31/8/13	At 31/8/14
BELB	1125	1200	1295	1404	1565
WELB	1364	1365	1313	1368	1446
NEELB	1021	1046	1096	1141	1270
SEELB	1148	1266	1279	1429	1630
SELB	1157	1139	1187	1200	1282

The figures shown above include all Special Needs and Additional Special Needs classroom assistants.

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Department for Finance and Personnel

Voluntary Exit Scheme

Mrs Sandra Overend (UUP – Mid Ulster) - To ask the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on the Voluntary Exit Scheme.

Mr S Hamilton (Minister for Finance and Personnel): Plans to develop a Voluntary Exit Scheme for the NICS are well advanced. The Executive agreed the preferred option at its meeting on 5 February. It is intended that the Scheme will be launched on 2 March 2015. The Scheme will be open to virtually all Civil Servants, including part-time staff, below Permanent Secretary (and analogous) grades.

We anticipate those selected to leave under the Scheme will do so in tranches between 30 September 2015 and 31st March 2016, however there will not be a provision for staff to select a leaving date when making their applications.

Trade Union Side has been consulted throughout the development of the Scheme, both at departmental level and centrally through the Whitley Executive machinery. We will continue this consultation up to and beyond launch.

The overarching objective of the NICS Voluntary Exit Scheme is a permanent NICS pay bill reduction in the 2015/16 financial year and beyond. I would emphasise that a successful outcome can only be achieved if all departments adopt a collaborative and co-operative approach to releasing staff and manage the redeployment consequences in a corporate fashion. **(16th February)**

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Voluntary Exit Scheme

Mr Mickey Brady (Sinn Féin – Newry and Armagh) - To ask the Minister of Finance and Personnel how he will ensure that the Voluntary Exit Scheme will not lead to skills shortages in the public sector.

Mr S Hamilton (Minister for Finance and Personnel): As the Minister of Finance and Personnel, I am responsible for seeking, allocating and monitoring the funding for voluntary exit schemes across the public sector. These schemes will support the pay-bill reductions required to address budgetary constraints. My Department is also responsible for the development and implementation of a specific voluntary exit scheme for the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS).

For the NICS scheme and bearing in mind the fact that the scheme is voluntary, the number and skills base of staff wishing to exit is not yet known. However, in the first instance, the staffing complement in terms of skills requirements will be managed locally within each department. Where requested, Corporate Human Resources (CHR) within DFP will assist with the deployment of staff between NICS departments to ensure skills are maintained across the NICS.

In the wider public sector, it will be for individual public bodies to decide on how pay-bill reductions will be achieved with business cases supporting for each scheme. Each body will need to address the service and skills implications for their own organisations.

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Department of Health

Cottages Children's Respite Facility

Mr Fearghal McKinney (SDLP – South Belfast) - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the future of The Cottages children's respite facility in Derry.

Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety): The Western Trust has advised me that it is still considering the best way forward in its review of children's respite services. Families affected will be advised of its decision in due course. **(16th February)**

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Toner Report

Mr Declan McAleer (Sinn Féin – West Tyrone) - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many recommendations of the Toner Report have been implemented.

Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety): One recommendation of the Toner Report is in the process of being implemented. This involves the rewriting of the Department's child protection guidance, *Co-operating to Safeguard Children*. A team was established to review and update this safeguarding policy for children and young people taking account of changes in legislation and structures and with input from other Government Departments, their agencies and arms length bodies. It is planned that the draft consultation document will be launched for public consultation during early 2015.

All remaining Toner recommendations have been implemented. **(16th February)**

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Suicide Prevention Strategy

Mr Pat Ramsey (SDLP – Foyle) - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the new Suicide Prevention Strategy.

Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety): Extensive pre-consultation engagement has been undertaken to inform the development of the new mental health promotion/suicide prevention strategy. It is anticipated that a draft of the new strategy will be issued for public consultation in June 2015. In the meantime, my Department will be liaising with other Departments, agencies, and the Suicide Strategy Implementation Body to finalise the draft document. **(16th February)**

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Introduction of Pulse Oximetry for Newborns

Mr Robin Swann (UUP – North Antrim) - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the introduction of pulse oximetry for newborns in Northern Ireland.

Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety): I refer the honourable member to the answer I gave to AQW 37431/11-15.

As you are aware, the UK National Screening Committee (NSC) has recommended piloting the use of pulse oximetry to screen newborn babies for congenital heart defects. The aim of the pilot is to evaluate the impact of implementing newborn pulse oximetry screening on NHS services and to establish feasibility for future national rollout as an addition to the existing suite of screening tests undertaken as part of the newborn programme.

Pilot sites have now been identified. **Phase one** is due to commence this month and will undertake baseline assessment and data collection in the selected pilot sites. **Phase two** will commence in May 2015 and will introduce or assure the agreed national screening protocol in those pilot sites already undertaking newborn pulse oximetry and collect data to record impact of any change. The data collection in this phase will run until 31st December 2015 after which the pilot will be evaluated.

The NSC will then consider the findings from the pilot and make a recommendation. I will await their recommendation before making a policy decision on this for Northern Ireland.

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Support Services for Young Carers

Mr Pat Ramsey (SDLP – Foyle) - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the support services dedicated to the needs of young carers in the North West.

Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety): Support services to young carers in the North West are provided by Barnardo's, on behalf of the Health and Social Care Board, and include:

- A break from caring
- A listening ear
- Individual support
- Information about the illness of the person they are caring for
- Peer Support Groups
- Personal Development group work programmes
- Advocacy, advice and signposting
- Fun/social activities
- A voice
- A safe environment to express concerns and worries.

It is the policy of the Department to treat all children who are providing care as children first and carers second. **(16th February)**

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Adults with Autism

Miss Michelle McIlveen (DUP – Strangford) - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action he is taking to improve services for adults with autism.

Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety): The Cross-Departmental Autism Strategy (2013-2020) and current Action Plan form the foundation for driving forward the improvement of Autism Services. They are being implemented in co-operation with other agencies and with input from service users, carers and families and the voluntary sector.

The Adult ASD Care pathway commenced in 2012 and much good work has been undertaken however, as with children's services, demand is greater than capacity. The HSC Board's review of ASD Services and audit of the Care pathways indicate that the focus for adults should include joint working; better information on the range of support available; improved advocacy and peer support; and exploring opportunities for development of life coaching and mentoring services. Individual Trusts have also developed initiatives to improve ASD Adult Services. **17th Feb**

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Proposed Changes to Children's Respite Care

Mr Pat Ramsey (SDLP – Foyle) - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the proposed changes to children's respite care in the Western Health and Social Care Trust area.

Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety): The Western Trust has advised me that it is still considering the best way forward in its review of children's respite services. Families affected will be advised of its decision in due course. The Trust's review of these services is primarily to meet new and increasing needs and to manage these within their existing funding – it is not solely a proposal to save money.

As part of this review, consideration has been given to the very different physical environments of the two respite homes, the different staffing skills and structures, the needs of the children using the service, and the requirement to provide safe and appropriate care and support to children and their families. **(17th February)**

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Services for Substance Misuse

Mr Raymond McCartney (Sinn Féin – Foyle) - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the services available for people under 18 dealing with substance misuse.

Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety): In line with cross-departmental strategy to prevent and address the harm related to substance misuse, a range of information and advice, intervention, harm reduction, and treatment and support services is available for those who misuse alcohol and drugs at all ages, including children and young people. Where appropriate, these services work in partnership with other Health and Social Care teams to respond to the complex needs of clients, including Children and Family Services, Mental Health teams, Probation and Criminal Justice teams. A directory of all alcohol and drugs services currently funded by the Public Health Agency (PHA) in each HSC Trust area, including for children and young people, is available on the PHA website. Work is underway to commission a range of updated services in light of new guidelines and evidence, and it is anticipated these will be in place from July 2015. **(17th February)**

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Mental Capacity Bill

Mr Declan McAleer (Sinn Féin – West Tyrone) - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when he will introduce the Mental Capacity Bill.

Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety): My Department, alongside the Department of Justice, is working on the development of the draft Mental Capacity Bill. It is my aim to submit a draft Bill to the Executive next month, with a view to seeking approval to introduce, to enable passage through the Assembly by March 2016. **(17th February)**

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Foster Care

Ms Bronwyn McGahan (Sinn Féin – Fermanagh and South Tyrone) - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) how many children and young people from the Southern Health and Social Care Trust are currently in foster care; (ii) how many of the total number of children and young people are fostered within the geographical boundary of the Southern Health and Social Care Trust; and (iii) what percentage of the overall budget is set aside for fostering. **[Priority Written]**

Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety): This information is not held centrally and was requested from the Southern Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust.

The Southern HSC Trust has informed me that

- i)** at 17th February 2015 there were 366 children in foster care in the Southern HSC Trust;
- ii)** of these, 323 were placed in foster care placements within the Trust's geographical boundaries;
- iii)** as a percentage of the overall Trust budget, 1.61% is set aside for fostering.

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Integrated Care Partnerships

Mr Fearghal McKinney (SDLP – South Belfast) - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the (i) proposed; and (ii) actual date of implementation of the Integrated Care Partnerships, in each Health and Social Care Trust.

Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety): The proposed date for establishment of the 17 Integrated Care Partnerships was June 2013. All seventeen ICPs were established in June 2013. The 17 partnership committees met for the first time in June 2013 but did not at that stage have full membership. Work continued over the following six months to ensure that all ICPs had full membership. The chairperson role was carried out by the ICP clinical lead until an elected chairperson was agreed.

By January 2014 the majority of committees had full representation and had elected a chairperson. The three ICP committees in the Southern area elected their chairpersons in June 2014.

All 17 committees continue to meet on a quarterly basis and work continues to ensure that there is consistent and full membership. **(19th February)**

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Foster Care

Mr Fearghal McKinney (SDLP – South Belfast) - To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 40581/11-15, to detail the mechanism in place to ensure that children in foster care, where appropriate, have access to classroom assistants.

Mr J Wells (The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety): I have been advised by the Department of Education that access to classroom assistant support is not determined by whether or not a child is in foster care; rather it is determined by the individual needs of the pupil, for example special educational needs. This is based on an assessment carried out by an Education and Library Board.

When a pupil enters the care system it is the responsibility of the Health and Social Care Trust responsible for the child's care to ensure that the relevant school is notified. Every looked after child of school age is required to have in place a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which aims to promote positive educational outcomes for the young person in order to achieve their full potential. It is the overarching Education Plan for the young person that takes account of the young person's views and brings together other education plans such as the Individual Education Plan and Statement of Special Educational Needs.

The Health and Social Care Board has advised that information in relation to the number of children in foster care who have access to a classroom assistant could only be provided at disproportionate costs. **(19th February)**

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Department of Justice

Consultation Process on the Termination of Pregnancy

Mr Daithí McKay (Sinn Féin – North Antrim) - To ask the Minister of Justice when he will publish a response to the consultation process on the termination of pregnancy in respect of lethal foetal abnormality and sexual crime.

Mr Ford (Minister of Justice): A large number of responses to the consultation have been received, including detailed submissions from the relevant medical professional bodies. Although the process of analysing these responses is not yet complete, and I do not want to pre-empt the outcome, it is my understanding at this stage that the main professional medical bodies have not raised any issues about the ability of clinicians to diagnose accurately foetal conditions which are lethal.

A full assessment of these responses will be reflected in the summary document which I hope to publish as soon as possible. **(17th February)**

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Bail Conditions

Lord Morrow of Clogher Valley (DUP – Fermanagh and South Tyrone) - To ask the Minister of Justice (i) what onus is placed upon parents or guardians to ensure that the bail conditions of a young person in their guardianship are monitored and adhered to; (ii) what action can be taken against parents, guardians or others for failing to appropriately monitor young persons in these circumstances; and (iii) whether this also applies to young people residing in care facilities.

Mr Ford (Minister of Justice): The granting of bail and any conditions set is a matter for the judiciary, while the monitoring of bail conditions is an operational matter for the PSNI.

In cases where court bail for a child requires a surety, then that surety would normally be a parent or guardian, where that person is available and appropriate. In such cases, the parent or guardian is required to ensure that the child appears at court on every occasion the case is listed and abides by any bail conditions which may be imposed, otherwise any recognizance agreed by the surety may be forfeited.

The Youth Justice Agency assists in the supervision, surveillance and support of young people subject to bail in specific cases where the court has requested it. This may include

conditions relating to parental involvement. In situations where there has been no specific mention of parent/guardian responsibility in bail conditions, the Agency's dedicated Bail Support and Supervision Team, in partnership with the PSNI Reducing Offending Unit teams, will seek to work alongside the young person's support systems in order to maximise adherence to their bail conditions.

In the case of young people residing in care facilities, this is a matter for the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. **(17th February)**

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Publication of Photographs

Lord Morrow of Clogher Valley (DUP – Fermanagh and South Tyrone) - To ask the Minister of Justice what consideration has been given to the publication of photographs of persons wanted by bench or arrest warrant following failures to attend court, particularly in relation to serious allegations and convictions awaiting sentencing.

Mr Ford (Minister of Justice): The Police Service of Northern Ireland may photograph persons detained under The Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 in connection with the investigation of an offence. Any decision to publish photographs for other purposes would be an operational matter for the PSNI.

I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board. You may wish to direct your question to the PSNI.

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Community Management of Offenders

Lord Morrow of Clogher Valley (DUP – Fermanagh and South Tyrone) - To ask the Minister of Justice (i) what agencies are involved in the community management of Owen Roe McDermott and James McDermott; (ii) who risk assessed their current residence and classed it suitable; (iii) whether it is normal practice for offenders of this nature to be housed close to a school; and (iv) whether he will order a review into the management and structures of decision-making of this and similar cases.

Mr Ford (Minister of Justice): PSNI are the designated risk managers with support from the Western Health and Social Care Trust. There is a risk management plan which is tailored to the circumstances of the individuals and the risk they present to the public and their location has been carefully considered as part of the risk management process.

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Department of Regional Development

Road Safety Measures

Mr Peter Weir (DUP – North Down) - To ask the Minister for Regional Development to detail the road safety measures undertaken by Transport NI at each post-primary school in North Down, over the last five years; and to outline any future plans for improving road safety at post-primary schools in the area.

Mr Kennedy (Minister of Regional Development): My Department is currently preparing its work programmes for 2015/16, details of which will be published in TransportNI's Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils. Once completed, the Council Reports for the 2015/16 financial year will be published on my Department's internet site.

Information on completed roads schemes can be found in TransportNI's Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils. These reports can be accessed from my Department's internet site at the following web address: <http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/publications.htm>

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Department of Social Development

Welfare Benefits

Mr David McNarry (UKIP – Strangford) - To ask the Minister for Social Development whether people who receive welfare benefits will be given an assurance that they will not be disadvantaged by any changes to the welfare system. **[Priority Written]**

Mr Storey (Minister for Social Development): My Department is continuing to develop proposals for providing additional financial support to those claimants that will be adversely impacted by the Welfare Reforms. Work is ongoing to determine appropriate eligibility criteria and the level of payments that can be made from within allocated funds to each claimant group affected.

I can provide an assurance that, following agreement with Executive colleagues, the details of any scheme will be issued for public consultation. My department will also be communicating with claimants and the general public in Northern Ireland on the details of the changes to the benefit system brought about by the Welfare Reform Bill.

(16th February)

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