

# Workshop 3

## Learning and Achievement



# Children's Services Co-operation Act (NI) 2015

## Well-being of children and young persons

1.—(1) **The functions conferred by this Act are to be exercised for the purpose of improving the well-being of children and young persons.**

(2) For this purpose the “well-being” of children and young persons includes—

(a) physical and mental health;

(b) the enjoyment of play and leisure;

(c) **learning and achievement;**

(d) living in safety and with stability;

(e) economic and environmental well-being;

(f) the making by them of a positive contribution to society;

(g) living in a society which respects their rights;

(h) living in a society in which equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted between persons who share a relevant characteristic and persons who do not share that characteristic.

(3) In this section “relevant characteristic” means a characteristic mentioned in any of paragraphs (a) to (d) of section 75(1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

**(4) In determining the meaning of well-being for the purposes of this Act, regard is to be had to any relevant provision of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**

# UNCRC – Article 28

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:
  - (a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;
  - (b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;
  - (c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;
  - (d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;
  - (e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.
  
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.
  
3. States Parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

# UNCRC – Article 29

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:
  - (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
  - (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
  - (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;
  - (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;
  - (e) The development of respect for the natural environment.
  
2. No part of the present article or article 28 shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principle set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article and to the requirements that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.

# General Comment 1 – The Aims of Education

- General Comment - a statement of the meaning and objectives of an Article.
- Insight into Government's obligations under Article 29(1).
- Education must be child-centred, child-friendly and empowering.
- Goal is to strengthen the child's capacity to enjoy the full range of human rights, to promote a culture which is infused by appropriate human rights values and to empower the child through developing his or her skills, learning and other capacities, human dignity, self-esteem and self-confidence.
- 'Education' goes far beyond formal schooling to embrace the broad range of life experiences and learning processes which enable children, individually or collectively, to develop their personalities, talents and abilities and to live a full and satisfying life within society.

*UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, **The aims of education** (2001) CRC/GC/2001/1*

# Concluding Observations 2008

33. *The Committee recommends that the State party...*

(a) *Promote, facilitate and implement, in legislation as well as in practice, within the family, schools, and the community as well as in institutions and in administrative and judicial proceedings, the principle of respect for the views of the child.*

61. *The Committee recommends that the State party intensify its efforts in order to provide adolescents with appropriate reproductive health services, including reproductive health education in the school.*

The Committee highlighted the detrimental impact that child poverty has on access to education (*Para 65*)

# Concluding Observations 2008

67. *The Committee recommends that the State party:*

- (a) Continue and strengthen its efforts to reduce the effects of the social background of children on their achievement in school;*
- (b) Invest considerable additional resources in order to ensure the right of all children to a truly inclusive education which ensures the full enjoyment to children from all disadvantaged, marginalized and school-distant groups;*
- (c) Ensure that all children out of school get alternative quality education;*
- (d) Use the disciplinary measure of permanent or temporary exclusion as a means of last resort only, reduce the number of exclusions and get social workers and educational psychologists in school in order to help children in conflict with school;*
- (e) Make sure that children without parental care have a representative who actively defends their best interests;*

# Concluding Observations 2008

- (f) Intensify its efforts to tackle bullying and violence in schools, including through teaching human rights, peace and tolerance;*
- (g) Strengthen children's participation in all matters of school, classroom and learning which affect them;*
- (h) Ensure that children who are able to express their views have the right to appeal against their exclusion as well as the right, in particular for those in alternative care, to appeal to special educational need tribunals*
- (i) Take measures to address segregation of education in Northern Ireland;*
- (j) Put an end to the two-tier culture in Northern Ireland by abolishing the 11+ transfer test and ensure that all children are included in admission arrangements in post-primary schools.*

*78 e) provide for a statutory right to education for all children deprived of their liberty*

*Concluding Observations United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, CRC/C/GBR/CO/4, 3 October 2008*

# Your Voice Matters

Engagement with 500+ Children and Young People

## Education Issues Arising

- Educational Inequalities,
- Transfer,
- Segregation in Education,
- Voices of Children in Shaping Educational Policy,
- Levels of Anxiety in Education,
- Bullying,

# Your Voice Matters

- The Cost of Division,
- Inadequate support for children with SEN and AEN,
- Class Sizes,
- The Cost of Education,
- Unsuitable Employment Support for NEET Young People

# Questions for Consideration

1. What are the issues affecting children generally that should be addressed under this outcome?
2. Are there specific issues affecting particular groups of children?
3. Where are the gaps in our knowledge?
4. What do children and young people think about this issue?
5. Who needs to be involved in addressing this outcome?
6. What other work is currently being taken forward in relation to this outcome?
7. Is it possible to focus down on a few initial priority areas for this outcome?