

NICCY Summary: Written Assembly Questions week ending 30 September 2016

Update on AgeGFS legislation

<p>AQO 307/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Colin McGrath (SDLP - South Down)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Age Goods, Facilities and Services legislation.</p> <p>Public consultation on proposals to extend age discrimination legislation to the provision of goods, facilities and services closed on 8 October 2015. When agreement is reached on the policy content of the proposed legislation we will then consider the options available to us for bringing this legislation before the Assembly.</p>
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Update on Age GFS

<p>AQW 2768/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Richie McPhillips (SDLP - Fermanagh and South Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the transfer of Goods, Facilities and Services policy to the Department for Communities.</p> <p>There are no plans to transfer policy responsibility for bringing forward legislation to prohibit unfair age discrimination by those providing goods, facilities and services to the Department for Communities.</p>
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Timeline for publishing Programme for Government

<p>AQW 2767/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Richie McPhillips (SDLP - Fermanagh and South Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline a timeframe in publishing the Programme for Government.</p> <p>We intend to publish the Programme for Government for consultation in the coming weeks, with a view to securing Executive agreement of a final document around the end of the year.</p>
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UNCRC Concluding Observations in the Programme for Government

<p>AQW 2573/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Steven Agnew (GPNI - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline how regard is being paid to the UNCRC concluding observations in the formation of the Programme for Government.</p> <p>The draft Programme for Government Framework contains the outcome: 'We give our children and young people the best start in life'.</p> <p>This reflects the Executive's commitment to building a society that values young people and enables them to fulfil their potential. It also reflects our commitment to promote early intervention as the most effective means of delivering wellbeing in later life.</p> <p>The plans, policies and programmes that the Executive develops and implements to deliver on this outcome will pay due regard to the UNCRC and the concluding observations.</p>
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Support for sign language users

<p>AQW 3624/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Michaela Boyle (SF - West Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Communities to outline what work he is doing to address the challenges faced by British/Irish Sign Language users.</p> <p>My Departmental officials are currently assessing the responses to the Sign Language Framework consultation which closed on 4 July 2016. Upon completion of this analysis I will decide on the way forward.</p> <p>In 2016/17 my Department is funding the following sign language projects to promote the social inclusion of British Sign Language (BSL) and Irish Sign Language (ISL) users and deaf children and their families:</p> <p>National Deaf Children’s Society - Family Sign Language courses and sign language training for professionals working with deaf children</p> <p>British Deaf Association - Family Sign Language in the Home courses for families with deaf children and enhancement of the accessibility of information and services for Deaf Sign Language users through participation in International Men/Women’s Days events</p> <p>British Deaf Association – Family Signing at Belfast Zoo with a Deaf tutor teaching animal/environmental signs to deaf children and their families to promote social inclusion and sign language culture</p> <p>Action Deaf Youth – Provision of accredited BSL Level 1 and Level 2 courses for deaf young people and children of Deaf adults and the provision of informal BSL training for parents of young deaf children to teach them the skills and sign vocabulary needed to engage in active play</p>
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Hands That Talk – Provision of Deaf awareness and tailored sign language courses to local banks, shops, restaurants/cafes/takeaways, health centres/pharmacies, leisure centres and transport service providers in the north west region to promote the social inclusion of sign language users

John Carberry MBE – Deaf awareness and ISL taster classes for community/voluntary groups and schools in Greater Belfast and Co Antrim

D'Sign Arts Group – Production of 'Death of the Innocents' play based on the true story of 6 deaf children killed in a fire in Strabane Deaf School in 1865 for presentation at the Alley Theatre, Strabane and Lyric Theatre, Belfast in December 2016 St Joseph's Centre for Deaf People/Kinghan Church for the Deaf joint project – Deaf awareness and tailored BSL classes for 40 participating schools across counties Antrim and Down

I have also committed an additional £60,000 in June 2016 monitoring which will provide for additional sign language classes for parents of deaf children in several centres across Northern Ireland. My officials will continue to engage with the Deaf community, parents of deaf children, local universities and other key stakeholders to promote sign language and improve access to services for the Deaf community and their families.

Changes to benefits sanctions following Welfare Reform

<p>AQW 3089/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Daniel McCrossan (SDLP - West Tyrone)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister for Communities to detail the changes to benefits sanctions following the introduction of Welfare Reform.</p> <p>The changes to benefits sanctions are contained in the Employment and Support Allowance (Sanctions) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016 (S.R. 2016 No. 240) and the Jobseeker’s Allowance (Sanctions) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016 (S.R. 2016 No. 241) and will come into operation at the same time as Universal Credit comes into operation in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The Employment and Support Allowance (Sanctions) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016 revise sanctions for those claimants of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) who fail to attend a work-focussed interview (WFI) or to undertake work related activity (WRA) without good cause. The amount of the new sanction will be 100 percent of the personal allowance for a single person. The revised sanctions regime will have two parts – an open ended period and on top of that a fixed period:</p> <p>the open-ended part of the sanction is that the claimant will be sanctioned until they take part in the WFI or undertake WRA or agree to do so on a scheduled date.</p> <p>the fixed period part of the sanction will be an additional fixed period of 1 week for a first failure, 2 weeks for a second failure within 52 weeks of the first and 4 weeks when it is a third or subsequent failure which is within 52 weeks of the last previous failure.</p> <p>When claimants re-engage within one week of the failure or before a decision to sanction has been made, only the fixed</p>
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period will apply. In the case of multiple sanctions, they will run concurrently. If, after a sanction begins, the claimant is moved out of the work related activity group (WRAG) and therefore no longer subject to the requirements of WFIs and WRA, the sanction will end at that point.

The Regulations also change the effective date of a sanction, so that it takes effect from the first day of the benefit week after the one for which the claimant was last paid ESA. The aim is to make the link between claimants' failures to comply and the sanction clearer and swifter. A right of appeal against the decision continues to be available.

The new regime will include access to hardship payments for those who have a sanction imposed on their award. Hardship payments will be available from the beginning of a sanction period, providing the claimant meets the conditions for entitlement to income-related Employment and Support Allowance.

The Jobseeker's Allowance (Sanctions) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016 introduce a new three-tier regime of fixed period sanctions for Jobseekers' Allowance - higher level sanctions - for example for leaving a job voluntarily, or through misconduct, or failing to take up a job or mandatory work activity – those subject to a higher level sanction will lose all of their JSA applicable amount for a fixed period of 13 weeks for a first failure, 26 weeks for a second failure, and 78 weeks for a third or subsequent failure (within a 52-week period of their last failure);

intermediate level sanctions - if not available for or actively seeking work the claimant will lose their entitlement – those subject to an intermediate level sanction will lose all of their JSA applicable amount for a fixed period of 4 weeks for a first

		<p>failure, rising to 13 weeks for a second or subsequent failure (within a 52-week period of their last failure) to be applied following a period of disallowance; and</p> <p>lower level sanctions - for example for failure to attend an adviser interview or failing to attend a training scheme - those subject to a lower level sanction will lose will lose all of their JSA applicable amount for a fixed period of 4 weeks for a first failure, and 13 weeks for a second or subsequent failure within 52 weeks of the previous failure.</p> <p>The amount of the sanction for all three types of sanction will not change under the revised regime. The current hardship provisions to protect the vulnerable will continue to apply to allow payment of income-based JSA, at a reduced rate, for the duration of the sanction period.</p>
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Educational Inequalities

<p>AQO 337/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Clare Bailey (GPNI - South Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education for his assessment of whether a consistent approach to the teaching of Relationship and Sexuality Education in all schools would help to reduce educational inequalities.</p> <p>Effective provision for Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is essential if pupils are to value themselves as individuals and make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives.</p> <p>The Department requires all grant-aided schools to develop their own RSE policy based on the ethos of their school and subject to consultation with parents and pupils.</p> <p>In August 2015 the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) produced revised RSE guidance for primary and post-primary schools.</p>
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		<p>CCEA's guidance does not stray into the actual content of teaching and learning, as this is a matter for each school.</p> <p>However, it provides a template for the development of a school's RSE policy, a directory signposting schools to useful resources as well as advice on the teaching of sensitive issues. An evaluation report on RSE provision in primary and special schools was published by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) in July 2016.</p>
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Support for pupils with Down Syndrome

<p>AQO 334/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Mervyn Storey (DUP - North Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education for his assessment of the support provided in schools for pupils with Down syndrome.</p> <p>A child with Down Syndrome will usually have a Statement of special educational needs (SEN) which will identify the extent of the child's SEN and the additional tailored support required to meet the individual needs of the child.</p> <p>Whilst the majority of pupils with Down Syndrome are educated within a special school setting, some are educated within a mainstream school or in a Learning Support Centre attached to a mainstream school.</p> <p>The Education Authority's (EA) Learning Support Service supports the effective inclusion of pupils with medical syndromes and/or complex learning needs, such as Down's, within the mainstream school setting.</p> <p>Support takes the form of advice and support/training to class teachers and classroom assistants regarding appropriate teaching strategies and resources to support children and young people with Down Syndrome. A level of adult assistance may also be provided as required.</p>
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Support for families not eligible for a Sure Start Programme

<p>AQO 333/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Paul Frew (DUP - North Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education how he will support the families of children that are not eligible for a Sure Start programme.</p> <p>Sure Start is a targeted service that has a distinct geographical remit, defined by ward boundaries, although provision is universal within the targeted areas. All children aged under four and their families, within the catchment area of each Sure Start, can access services.</p> <p>The Sure Start Programme was initially delivered in the 20% most deprived areas in Northern Ireland, and a recent expansion initiative to extend it into the 25% most deprived areas is expected to complete in 2016/17. Findings from the Independent Review of Sure Start (2015), together with existing research, provide assurance that targeting of available resources in areas of highest deprivation is likely to have the greatest impact on those children and families that can benefit from the type of services Sure Start offers.</p> <p>In some circumstances, and subject to resource availability, a degree of flexibility may be exercised to extend Sure Start services for children who live outside of the catchment areas, including children who are identified as being 'at risk'. Sure Start projects can also provide information on alternative early years provision that could offer support to families who do not reside in Sure Start areas.</p> <p>The Department of Education is currently investing around £25m per year in the Sure Start Programme, enabling the provision of support to around 38,800 children aged under four and their families.</p> <p>The Department also invests £56m per year in universal Pre</p>
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		<p>School Education to provide one year of funded pre-school education to every family that wants it, and will continue to work with other departments, agencies and non-statutory providers, where appropriate, in helping families to access support.</p>
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Criteria for allocating school places

<p>AQO 331/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Claire Hanna (SDLP - South Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education what advice he would give regarding the older sibling criteria used by primary schools when allocating school places in circumstances where the older siblings are unable to attend mainstream school due to special needs.</p> <p>Criteria used by a primary school to establish which children to admit in the event of the school being oversubscribed with applications are solely a matter for the school's Board of Governors.</p> <p>My Department provides guidance on the admissions process to all primary school Principals and Boards of Governors. The latest guidance is available on my Department's website and it recommends the use of an 'Eldest Child' criterion. The guidance recommends that this criterion is defined as 'children who, at the date of their application, are the eldest child of the family to be eligible to apply for admission to the school.</p> <p>The guidance reminds Boards of Governors that there may be circumstances whereby a family has not had the opportunity to have an elder child enrolled. These circumstances could include, as you have outlined, instances where the eldest sibling does not attend mainstream education. It may also arise, for example, where a child is more than seven years younger than their next eldest sibling or in cases where a family has moved home. The guidance advises Boards of Governors that no matter which criteria the school decides to use, that they are described clearly and fully.</p>
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Strategy for overcoming gap in educational outcomes

<p>AQO 330/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Catherine Seeley (SF - Upper Bann)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline his Department's strategy for overcoming the gap in educational outcomes between disadvantaged young people and their peers from higher income families.</p> <p>While recent statistics demonstrate a continued upward trend in the performance of our school leavers, there is still a need to address low levels of attainment and the significant gaps that remain between our most and least deprived pupils. We also need to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes so that more of our young people leave school with these key skills.</p> <p>Teachers and school leaders are best placed to identify those pupils at risk of underachievement and, through high quality teaching and learning, identify the most appropriate actions to meet individual pupil needs and raise attainment.</p> <p>One of my key priorities is to drive more ambitious improvement in every school and in every sector so that more of our young people achieve and progress.</p> <p>I will focus on those policies that are driving improvement and which are supporting schools and teachers in their work to raise standards and overcome the barriers to learning which some pupils face.</p> <p>I intend to work closely with schools, early years and childcare providers, the youth service and other education stakeholders to ensure that together we can meet the needs and nurture the aspirations of our children and young people.</p>
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Encouraging children to cycle to and from school

<p>AQO 328/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Christopher Stalford (DUP - South Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline the steps his Department is taking to encourage children to cycle to and from school.</p> <p>I am committed to improving the wellbeing of children and young people and ensuring they recognise the importance of living and travelling sustainably to help protect the environment for their future.</p> <p>The Department of Education promotes cycling in schools through the curriculum; partnership working with other organisations and through infrastructure improvements within the school grounds.</p> <p>The statutory curriculum provides teachers with opportunities to encourage children to take up cycling. These include through Physical Education, The WorldAround Us (at primary level) and the Environment and Society (at post-primary level).</p> <p>There are also opportunities within the curriculum for teachers to increase children’s awareness of road safety. However road safety education, which includes cycling proficiency, is the responsibility of the Department for Infrastructure (DfI).</p> <p>The Department is continuing to engage with DfI and the Public Health Agency on their Active Schools Travel Programme. In the last two financial years we have provided capital funding for the installation of cycle shelters in 23 schools who fully participated in the programme. Further installations to support the extended programme will be considered against competing prioritie</p>
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Educating young people on dangers of texting while driving

<p>AQW 3300/16- 21</p>	<p>Mrs Sandra Overend (UUP - Mid Ulster)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline what programmes are in place in schools to educate young people on the dangers of texting while driving.</p> <p>The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) which has statutory responsibility for road safety education has developed a number of road safety resources to help teachers teach road safety in schools. Resources include six education packs which all deal with different aspects of road safety, including distractions; two of which address texting while driving. These packs are used by teachers to initiate discussion among young people and help them to determine what bad road safety choices are and encourage them to always make better choices while using the roads.</p> <p>DfI has also provided a series of seven short lessons which deal with all aspects of road safety, again including distractions and texting. These lessons can be taught as a standalone lesson or as a suite of lessons.</p> <p>The resources mentioned above are made available to all schools through the C2k exchange (Fronter andEquella). Teachers, therefore, have ready access to the resources needed to help in the planning and teaching of road safety education.</p>
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Addressing sexual harassment in schools

<p>AQW 3299/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Robbie Butler (UUP - Lagan Valley)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education , given the recent House of Commons report on sexual harassment in schools, to outline what measures he will take to address sexual harassment in schools.</p> <p>The House of Commons report that you refer to, whilst quoting UK statistics, relates exclusively to policies and practice operational in GB. There are some essential differences in the education system in Northern Ireland, including the statutory requirement for schools here to provide pupils at Key Stage 3 with opportunities to “explore the implications of sexual maturation [and] the emotional, social and moral implications of early sexual activity”, and to enable pupils at Key Stage 4 to “develop their understanding of relationships and sexuality and the responsibilities of healthy relationships”</p> <p>Further, every school here is required to have a school discipline/behaviour policy. This is to promote good behaviour, self-discipline and respect throughout the school, and prevent bullying. Every school must communicate its policy to staff, parents and pupils at least once a year.</p> <p>It is important however to also emphasise that parents have a central role to play in guiding, monitoring and influencing their own children’s behaviour.</p> <p>You may be interested to know that the Department issued circular guidance to all schools earlier this year on ‘Children who display harmful sexualised behaviour’. The guidance was provided to help schools identify children exhibiting harmful sexualised behaviour and to ensure that these children receive an appropriate intervention at an early stage.</p>
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Educating young people on effects of pornography

<p>AQW 3297/16- 21</p>	<p>Mrs Sandra Overend (UUP - Mid Ulster)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education what measures have been put in place to educate young people of the effects of pornography.</p> <p>DE Circular 2015/22, which issued in August 2016, advised schools about revised Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) guidance produced by the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). There are two separate guidance documents – one for primary level and one for post-primary level.</p> <p>The guidance does not stray into the actual content of teaching and learning as this is a matter for each school across all Areas of Learning within the statutory curriculum. It does, however, make reference to issues such as pornography and ‘sexting’, and provides a resource directory signposting schools to useful resources which teachers/schools may find helpful.</p>
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Language used by pupils

<p>AQW 3296/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Robbie Butler (UUP - Lagan Valley)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education how he plans to address the growing use of sexually offensive language among teenage pupils.</p> <p>The House of Commons report that you refer to, whilst quoting UK statistics, relates exclusively to policies and practice operational in GB. There are some essential differences in the education system in Northern Ireland, including the statutory requirement for schools here to provide pupils at Key Stage 3 with opportunities to “explore the implications of sexual maturation [and] the emotional, social and moral implications of early sexual activity”, and to enable pupils at Key Stage 4 to “develop their understanding of relationships and sexuality and the responsibilities of healthy relationships”</p>
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Educational Welfare Officers

	<p>AQW 3121/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Carál Ní Chuilín (SF - North Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail (i) how many Educational Welfare Officers are employed; and (ii) where they are situated.</p> <p>There are 121 Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) employed by the Education Authority. The table below sets out the numbers attached to each office:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="710 795 1316 1400"> <thead> <tr> <th>Number of EWOs</th> <th>Area Offices</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>30</td> <td>Armagh</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24</td> <td>Omagh</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20</td> <td>Dundonald</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25</td> <td>Ballymena</td> </tr> <tr> <td>22</td> <td>Belfast</td> </tr> <tr> <td>121</td> <td>TOTAL</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Number of EWOs	Area Offices	30	Armagh	24	Omagh	20	Dundonald	25	Ballymena	22	Belfast	121	TOTAL
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Ratio of special needs classroom assistants

To ask the Minister of Education to detail the ratio of special needs classroom assistants employed to the number of children with statements of special needs, broken down by year since 2008.

The following table details the ratio of special needs classroom assistants employed to the number of children with statements of special educational needs (SEN) from 2008/09 onwards.

It is however important to note that ratios are not used by the Education Authority to determine the number of classroom assistants employed to the number of SEN children. The number of classroom assistants required depends on the individual needs of each child, and whether this is in a mainstream school setting or a special school.

Year	i) Special Needs Classroom Assistants ^{1,2}	ii) Children with statements of special educational needs ^{2,3}	Ratio of i) to ii)
2008/09	5,082	12,164	0.42
2009/10	5,307	12,312	0.43
2010/11	5,465	12,509	0.44
2011/12	6,222	14,002	0.44
2012/13	6,454	14,426	0.45
2013/14	6,920	15,058	0.46

Mr
Gerry
Carroll
(PBPA
- West
Belfast)

[AOW](#)
[2912/16-](#)
[21](#)

		2014/156	7,402	15,853	0.47
		2015/167	7,965	16,464	0.48

1 - Classroom assistants source: Education Authority payroll system and Voluntary Grammar and Grant Maintained Integrated (VG/GMI) school support staff survey.

2 – Information for classroom assistants in nursery schools was not available.

3 - Statemented pupils source: NI school census.

4 – Information for special needs classroom assistants in VG/GMI schools is not available prior to 2011/12.

5 – Information on classroom assistants for one grant maintained integrated school is not available for 2013/14.

6 – Information on classroom assistants for three voluntary grammar schools is not available for 2014/15.

7 – Information on classroom assistants for one voluntary grammar school is not available for 2015/16.

8 – Where information is not available on classroom assistants the corresponding data for statemented pupils has been excluded.

Children participating in shared education programmes

AQW 2895/16- 21	Mr Chris Lyttle (APNI - East Belfast)	<p>To ask the Minister of Education , relating to the PFG 2011-15 target of having all children participate in shared education programmes by 2015, to outline why a total of 2.5 per cent participation was achieved.</p> <p>It is not clear what the 2.5 per cent relates too, however the PfG 2011-15 target was “to ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015”. This was in recognition that while all children should have the opportunity, not all may wish to participate.</p> <p>It is also worth noting that the 2015 School Omnibus survey of</p>
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		<p>school Principals shows that 59.3% of respondents indicated that they partnered in shared education with another school. The 2015 Young Life & Times Survey of 16 years olds shows that 51% reported that they had participated in shared education with other schools, while the 2015 Kids Life and Times survey of P7 pupils shows that 58% reported participation in shared education.</p>
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Shared and Integration targets in PFG

<p>AQW 2893/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Chris Lyttle (APNI - East Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline why there are no targets for shared and integrated education in PFG 2016-21.</p> <p>The Programme for Government 2016-21 is being developed using an outcomes-based approach based on delivering improved well-being for citizens. Consultation on the Draft Programme for Government Framework concluded in July, and a further consultation on a full draft Programme for Government is planned for early October.</p>
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Increasing free early education and childcare

<p>AQW 2873/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Chris Lyttle (APNI - East Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline the progress he has made in increasing free early education and childcare from 12.5 hours to 20 hours per week.</p> <p>Any increase for funded pre-school education places that are currently provided for at least 12.5 hours per week would require a comprehensive analysis of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the potential implications for the delivery of the universally funded Pre-school Education Programme; the potential impact of an increase in pre-school hours on the early years estate where 3,000 additional pre-school education places (currently offered in the afternoon as part of a dual day)
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		<p>may be needed as a result of a longer pre-school day; increased funding requirements; and existing research on the benefits of increasing the number of hours provided to pre-school children.</p> <p>The provision of additional childcare services, including wraparound services to complement existing pre-school education provision, will be considered in the context of the Childcare Strategy and be decided on the basis of need, demand, capacity and available resources.</p> <p>I hope to bring forward the Childcare Strategy to my Executive colleagues in the coming months, having taken account of the many responses received to the consultation, the Programme for Government and the new opportunities that</p>
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Pre-school home teaching

<p>AQW 2531/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Robin Swann (UUP - North Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail the number of children that availed of pre-school home teaching, by constituency, for each of the last three years.</p> <p>The Education Authority (EA) is unable to provide information by constituency.</p>
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Numbers of Speech and Language Therapists and other therapists

<p>AQW 2966/16-21</p>	<p>Mr Treve Clarke (DUP - South)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health how many people have been employed as a (i) Speech and Language Therapist; (ii) Physiotherapist; and (iii) Occupational Therapist in (a) Oakfield School and Assessment Centre; (b) Harberton School; and (c) Glenveagh School, in each of the last five years.</p> <p>It is assumed part (a) of this question refers to Oakwood School and Assessment Centre, not Oakfield.</p>
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The tables below detail the number and whole time equivalent (WTE) of occupational therapists, speech and language therapists and physiotherapists employed at Oakwood, Harberton and Glenveagh schools, in each of the last five years.

Oakwood School and Assessment Centre

Year	Occupational Therapy		Speech & Language Therapy		Physiotherapy	
	WTE	Headcount	WTE	Headcount	WTE	Headcount
2015/16	1.8	2	2.3 4	4	1.3 8	3
2014/15	1.8	2	2.3 4	4	1.3 8	3
2013/14	1.8	2	2.2 4	4	1.3 8	3
2012/13	1.8	2	2.2 4	4	1.3 8	3
2011/12	1.8	2	2.2 4	4	1.3 8	3

Source: Belfast HSC Trust

Harberton School

Year	Occupational Therapy	Speech & Language Therapy	Physiotherapy
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	WT E	Headco unt	WT E	Headco unt	WT E	Headco unt
2015/ 16	2	2	1.7 4	3	0	0
2014/ 15	2	2	1.7 2	3	0	0
2013/ 14	2	2	1.7 2	3	0	0
2012/ 13	2	2	1.7 2	3	0	0
2011/ 12	2	2	1.7 2	3	0	0

Source: Belfast HSC Trust
Glenveagh School

Year	Occupational Therapy		Speech & Language Therapy		Physiotherapy	
	WT E	Headco unt	WT E	Headco unt	WT E	Headco unt
2015/ 16	1.6	2	2.8 2	4	1.3 4	3
2014/ 15	1.6	2	2.8 2	4	1.4 4	4
2013/ 14	1.6	2	2.8 2	4	1.5 4	4

				2		4	
				2.8		1.3	
		2012/ 13	1.6	2	2	4	3
		2011/ 12	1.6	2	2	4	3

Source: Belfast HSC Trust

Acquired Brain Injury

<p>AQW 2953/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Catherine Seeley (SF - Upper Bann)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health (i) how her Department defines Acquired Brain Injury; (ii) whether there is a stipulation to record this on medical records; and (iii) how many people are diagnosed with Acquired Brain Injury.</p> <p>(i) An Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) in the widest sense may be defined as any damage to the brain that is sudden in onset and that occurs after birth. It is therefore differentiated from congenital brain injuries and progressive degenerative conditions affecting the central nervous system.</p> <p>The term ABI can be used to describe traumatic brain injuries such as those caused by car accidents, falls, sporting injuries or assaults and non-traumatic injuries, for example those caused by infections, stroke, brain tumours or hypoxic injuries.</p> <p>(ii) It would be conventional professional practice to record any significant medical issues such as ABI on medical or other similar treatment records (e.g. Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Dentistry etc).</p> <p>(iii) The number of people diagnosed and living with ABI in the north of Ireland is estimated to be over 2000 per year.</p>
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Advice on accommodating unaccompanied child refugees

<p>AQW 2948/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Paula Bradshaw (APNI - South Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health what provision is being made and advice is being given on accommodating unaccompanied child refugees with foster parents between now and May 2021.</p> <p>It is assumed that this is a reference to the ‘National Transfer Scheme’ launched by the British Home Office in July 2016 to secure a more even distribution of caring responsibilities for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and unaccompanied refugee children who are looked after children across local authorities.</p> <p>My Department will continue to work closely with the Executive Office and British Home Office to consider the implications of extending the Scheme to the north of Ireland. This will include consideration of the type and nature of support and advice which would need to be given to Health and Social Care Trusts, which would become responsible for their care, other providers of services to looked after children, and our universal services, including schools. Any decision to accept unaccompanied refugee children will depend on the capacity within our children’s social care system to effectively meet their individual needs. As with all looked after children, unaccompanied refugee children would be placed in the care placement that is most appropriate for their assessed needs to achieve the best outcomes for them.</p>
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Gender identity service

<p>AQW 2875/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Clare Bailey (GPNI - South Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health how many people have accessed the regional gender identity service and the regional Knowing Our Identity youth service in each Health and Social Care Trust over the last ten years.</p>										
<p>The Gender Identity Service is a regional service based in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. The table below outlines the number of people who accessed the regional gender identity service over the period 15 September 2006 to 15 September 2016:</p>												
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Age Band</th> <th>Total Referrals</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>5-15</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16-64</td> <td>1433</td> </tr> <tr> <td>65+</td> <td>32</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Age Band	Total Referrals	5-15	2	16-64	1433	65+	32		
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<p>These figures cannot be broken down by Trust. The under 18 Gender Identity Dysphoria Service - Knowing Our Identity was established in August 2014. Since August 2014 a total of 134 patients have accessed the Knowing Our Identity service and can be broken down by Trust as follows:</p>												
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Trust</th> <th>Total Referrals</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Belfast</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Northern</td> <td>27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>South Eastern</td> <td>27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Southern</td> <td>20</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Trust	Total Referrals	Belfast	35	Northern	27	South Eastern	27	Southern	20
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			Western	25
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Short breaks policy for children with disabilities and their families

<p>AQW 2771/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Catherine Seeley (SF - Upper Bann)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health to outline what consideration her Department has given to a short breaks policy for children with disabilities and their families.</p> <p>My Department recognises the importance of short breaks for children with disabilities and their families. My Department provided funding of £1.57m for the financial year 2016/17 to the Family Fund, which provides a wide range of goods and services including short breaks focused on supporting the needs of children with a disability and their families in the north of Ireland.</p> <p>The Health and Social Care Trusts have a delegated statutory function to provide respite and short breaks in line with assessed need and this is subject to ongoing monitoring and performance management by the Health and Social Care Board.</p> <p>In addition, over the last three years the Board has invested significant funding of £7.5 million to support children with disabilities and their carers, and this includes the funding of short breaks and respite care.</p>
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Amendment to Serious Crime Act

<p>AQW 3646/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Paula Bradley (DUP - North Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Justice whether she plans to introduce an offence of controlling or coercive behaviour in intimate or familial relationships, similar to section 76 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 in England and Wales.</p> <p>As Minister of Justice I have identified that Domestic Violence and Abuse is a key priority for my tenure.</p> <p>On 12 September 2016, I announced in the Assembly my intention to introduce a specific offence in Northern Ireland to capture coercive and controlling behaviour. As I mentioned at the time, further work on the shape of the offence is required, therefore I cannot confirm at this stage whether it will mirror the provisions set out in section 76 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 for England and Wales. I will however ensure that the new offence provides equal protection to victims here in Northern Ireland.</p>
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Prevention of vulnerable young people being drawn into paramilitary activity

<p>AQW 3590/16- 21</p>	<p>Mr Chris Lyttle (APNI - East Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Justice how her Department is working to prevent vulnerable young people being drawn into paramilitary activity.</p> <p>The Early Intervention Transformation Programme (EITP) Board is leading work on behalf of the Executive to develop a programme to prevent vulnerable children and young people being drawn into paramilitary activity. My Department will contribute to this programme as appropriate.</p>
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Young people in juvenile justice centres diagnosed with acquired brain injury

<p>AQW 2951/16- 21</p>	<p>Ms Catherine Seeley (SF - Upper Bann)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Justice to detail the number of young people in juvenile justice centres that have been diagnosed with acquired brain injury.</p> <p>Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre does not keep specific statistics on young people within the Centre who have a formal diagnosis of Acquired Brain Injury.</p> <p>There will be some young people in Woodlands who have presented on committal with a range of cognitive, physical, emotional and behavioural issues and who may have an Acquired Brain Injury diagnosis established prior to admission.</p> <p>Support services for such young people are managed on individual plans by health and social care practitioners in Woodlands or through referral to relevant agencies which include the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) team based in Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre and the visiting Child Psychiatrist.</p>
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