

NICCY Summary: Written Assembly Questions week ending 29 May, 2015

Update on GFS

<p>AQO 8009/11-15</p>	<p>Mrs Pam Cameron (DUP - South Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on proposed age discrimination legislation relating to the provision of Goods, Facilities and Services.</p> <p>We made a statement on 19 February giving a commitment to extend legislation to give legal protection from unfair age discrimination, to those aged 16 years and over, by those providing, goods, facilities and services. The statement also announced the intention to bring forward a consultation document setting out proposals for legislation.</p> <p>Our officials have met with departments and key stakeholder organisations to progress the development of the proposed consultation document.</p> <p>On 15 April, Junior Minister Bell and Junior Minister McCann appeared before the Committee for OFMDFM to update Members on progress on the proposed legislation, including the development of the consultation document.</p> <p>Subject to Executive agreement, we intend to issue the consultation document in the near future.</p> <p>Once the consultation is complete and a robust policy agreed, we will then consider all the options available to us for bringing any proposed legislation before the Assembly.</p>
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Update on Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy

<p>AQW 46173/11-15</p>	<p>Mr Steven Agnew (GPNI - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to outline his Department's timeline for the review and revision of Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy.</p> <p>The review of the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity policy has been completed. It is anticipated that the revised policy will be available by the end of 2015.</p>
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Update on the Home to School Transport review

<p>AQW 46065/11- 15</p>	<p>Mr Chris Lyttle (APNI - East Belfast)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education for an update on the Home to School Transport Review; and what consideration he has given to the feasibility of providing free public transport for all school pupils.</p> <p>As you may be aware, I launched an independent review of home to school transport in December 2013. One of the elements I asked the panel of experts to consider was the feasibility of providing free public transport for all pupils. The panel presented me with their final report in August 2014; however, the panel did not include free public transport for all pupils as one of their recommendations.</p> <p>I intend to consult on the policy issues raised in the report later this year. I have an open mind in relation to the recommendations but first want to hear the views of the public and stakeholders in the upcoming consultation before reaching any decisions on the way forward. A number of operational issues will also be taken forward separately with the relevant public bodies.</p>
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Strategies to reduce academic gap between deaf and non-deaf pupils

<p>AQW 46052/11- 15</p>	<p>Mr Peter Weir (DUP - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail the strategies being pursued to reduce the academic attainment gap between deaf and non-deaf pupils.</p> <p>The Education Authority (EA) provides a comprehensive level of support, tailored to the individual needs of each child, to help hearing impaired children across the ability range achieve their full potential. Support is available from diagnosis and on a continuing level throughout school, appropriate to the pupil's needs. Support can include whole school training and advisory support for relevant school staff with specific advice regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the pupil's hearing loss and the implications on learning; maintenance of hearing aids and associated equipment; management of the pupil within the classroom; strategies for developing the pupil's attention and listening skills; strategies for maximising linguistic opportunity; strategies for improving memory skills; strategies to assist the pupil access the curriculum strategies to develop social skills and self-esteem. <p>Attainment is not, however, solely influenced by hearing loss but can also be attributed to a range of factors including age of diagnosis, use of prescribed amplification devices and the pupil's cognitive ability.</p> <p>The EA has advised that in addition to the wide range of measures provided to</p>
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		<p>support young hearing impaired people from diagnosis to school leaving age, appropriate access arrangements at GCSE level may also be provided including: a modified examination paper and/or extra time;</p> <p>Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) and examination officers will be reminded of special access arrangements available to the pupil; a live speaker in an aural examination; a sub-titled version of a video/film.</p>
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Assessment of academic attainment gap between deaf and no-deaf pupils

AQW 46051/11-15	Mr Peter Weir (DUP - North Down)	<p>To ask the Minister of Education for his assessment of the academic attainment gap between deaf and non-deaf pupils.</p> <p>The data outlined in my response to previous AQW 45969/11-15 shows that there is not a substantive difference in the academic attainment of school leavers, with or without a hearing loss, in mainstream schools.</p> <p>I remain confident that the strategies employed by the Education Authority continue to provide a comprehensive level of support to help pupils with a hearing loss achieve their full potential.</p>
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Bilingual teaching for classes of deaf children

AQW 46049/11-15	Mr Peter Weir (DUP - North Down)	<p>To ask the Minister of Education what consideration his Department has given to providing bilingual teaching (oral and sign language) for classes of deaf children.</p> <p>All deaf children should have access to a broad and balanced school curriculum to enable them to develop their full potential. I recognise, however, that deaf children are a diverse group and that not all do, or indeed should, fit into one form of provision.</p> <p>While the general aims of bilingual education are shared by the Education Authority it considers that the range of strategies outlined in my response to your previous AQW 46052/11-15 provide the best opportunity for support to be tailored to meet the individual needs of each child with hearing loss.</p>
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Innovative actions taken since introduction of Autism Strategy

<p>AQW 46028/11- 15</p>	<p>Mr Jim Allister (TUV - North Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education what innovative actions, and with what effect, have been taken since the introduction of the Autism Strategy.</p> <p>Since the launch of the cross-Departmental Autism Strategy and Action Plan in January 2014, DE has worked closely with the Education Authority (EA) and the Middletown Centre for Autism (MCA) on the implementation of the education-specific actions to develop support and provision for children and young people with autism. These include delivering training programmes by both the EA and MCA for teachers, educational professionals, youth workers and parents and providing ongoing effective support for pupils with autism.</p> <p>The EA and MCA will continue to build the capacity of schools to support the needs of children with autism through both their delivery of autism specific training and the capacity building work delivered as part of the specialist direct support offered to children with autism by the MCA.</p> <p>DE is represented on the Autism Strategy Implementation Group which is collectively responsible for monitoring progress against the actions and reflecting how implementation is progressing. The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has overall responsibility for the preparation of a subsequent report that will also consider the impact of the Strategy's actions over time which will be laid before the Assembly by December 2016.</p> <p>I am confident that the education-related actions in the Action Plan will help to ensure that children and young people with autism are provided with high quality education services that evolve to meet their needs as they progress through the education system.</p>
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Adherence of autism guidelines

<p>AQW 46025/11- 15</p>	<p>Mr Jim Allister (TUV - North Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education for his assessment of how far his Department is succeeding in adhering to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines on autism.</p> <p>The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) develops guidelines and provides advice in order to support the delivery of health and social care services across England, Scotland, Wales and the north of Ireland. The provision of educational support to children and young people on the autism spectrum in the north of Ireland is based upon the individual learning needs of each child and is not dependent on the child having a medical diagnosis. As a consequence, this educational support is developed and delivered independently of the NICE guidelines.</p>
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Numbers of children seeing educational psychologists in last 5 years

AQW 46024/11-15	Mr Jim Allister (TUV - North Antrim)	<p>To ask the Minister of Education how many children have been seen by educational psychologists in each of the last five years.</p> <p>The Education Authority has advised that the number of children who have been seen by an educational psychologist in each of the last five years is as follows:</p> <p>April 2010 – March 2011</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="571 692 1396 1090"> <tr><td>BELB</td><td>972</td></tr> <tr><td>NEELB</td><td>1181</td></tr> <tr><td>SEELB</td><td>1221</td></tr> <tr><td>SELB</td><td>1737</td></tr> <tr><td>WELB</td><td>1187</td></tr> <tr><td>TOTAL</td><td>6298</td></tr> </table> <p>April 2011 – March 2012</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="571 1128 1396 1527"> <tr><td>BELB</td><td>861</td></tr> <tr><td>NEELB</td><td>1213</td></tr> <tr><td>SEELB</td><td>1096</td></tr> <tr><td>SELB</td><td>1819</td></tr> <tr><td>WELB</td><td>1295</td></tr> <tr><td>TOTAL</td><td>6284</td></tr> </table> <p>April 2012 – March 2013</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="571 1565 1396 1964"> <tr><td>BELB</td><td>833</td></tr> <tr><td>NEELB</td><td>1311</td></tr> <tr><td>SEELB</td><td>1333</td></tr> <tr><td>SELB</td><td>1850</td></tr> <tr><td>WELB</td><td>1378</td></tr> <tr><td>TOTAL</td><td>6705</td></tr> </table>	BELB	972	NEELB	1181	SEELB	1221	SELB	1737	WELB	1187	TOTAL	6298	BELB	861	NEELB	1213	SEELB	1096	SELB	1819	WELB	1295	TOTAL	6284	BELB	833	NEELB	1311	SEELB	1333	SELB	1850	WELB	1378	TOTAL	6705
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Audit on availability of youth psychology across NI

AQW 46020/11- 15	Mr Jonathan Craig (DUP - Lagan Valley)	<p>To ask the Minister of Education whether the new Education Authority will conduct an audit on the availability of youth psychology across Northern Ireland, as waiting times for assessment are increasing.</p> <p>The Education Authority has advised that it plans to create a regional educational psychology service. As these regional structures are being put in place, the Authority will continue to monitor waiting lists for educational psychology services.</p>
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Teacher training for autism issues

<p>AQW 46015/11- 15</p>	<p>Mr Jonathan Craig (DUP - Lagan Valley)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education whether his Department, the Education Authority, or Middletown Centre for Autism keeps a database of teachers or schools who have accessed teacher training for autism issues; and what action has been taken to encourage schools who have failed to avail of this training opportunity, to do so.</p> <p>The Education Authority (EA) and the Middletown Centre for Autism (MCA) have advised that both bodies keep databases of teachers and schools that have availed of teacher training for autism. DE does not hold such a database. The EA has advised that teachers and schools are routinely directed to training and are actively encouraged to attend training where specific needs in relation to autism are identified in schools. When referrals for support are received by the EA, officers will review the status of training within the school and the school will be supported in meeting identified training needs as required.</p> <p>MCA has advised that it forwards marketing materials including training opportunities to every school in the north of Ireland twice a year.</p>
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Academic achievement of pupils with hearing loss

<p>AQW 45969/11- 15</p>	<p>Mr Peter Weir (DUP - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education what percentage of pupils with hearing loss in mainstream schools have achieved 5 GCSE passes or more in each of the last five years; and to outline how this compares to the percentages for pupils who do not have hearing loss.</p> <p>The answer is contained in the table below.</p> <p>Percentage of school leavers achieving at least 5 GCSEs at grades A*-G (including equivalents), 2009/10 to 2013/14,2</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="513 1588 1393 1989"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="2">Hearing Loss³</th> <th colspan="2">No Hearing Loss</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Number</th> <th>%</th> <th>Number</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2009/10</td> <td>47</td> <td>82.5</td> <td>21,145</td> <td>92.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010/11</td> <td>79</td> <td>91.9</td> <td>21,576</td> <td>93.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011/12</td> <td>45</td> <td>91.8</td> <td>21,318</td> <td>94.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012/13</td> <td>66</td> <td>95.7</td> <td>21,748</td> <td>94.8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Hearing Loss ³		No Hearing Loss		Number	%	Number	%	2009/10	47	82.5	21,145	92.9	2010/11	79	91.9	21,576	93.5	2011/12	45	91.8	21,318	94.7	2012/13	66	95.7	21,748	94.8
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		2013/14	66	86.8	21,487	95.2
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Source: School Leavers Survey

Notes:

1. Data exclude special and independent schools.
2. School leavers detailed in the above table may have other special educational need types in addition to, or in isolation of, hearing loss.
3. Percentages derived from base numbers of less than 100 should be viewed with caution to avoid drawing unwarranted conclusions from the data.

Funding for secondary pupils with hearing loss outside NI in last 5 years

<p>AQW 45967/11-15</p>	<p>Mr Peter Weir (DUP - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education how many pupils with hearing loss have been funded to attend a secondary school outside of Northern Ireland, in each of the last five years.</p> <p>The Education Authority has advised that the number of pupils with hearing loss, funded to attend a secondary school outside of the north of Ireland, in each of the last five years, is as follows:-</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="566 1093 1396 1489"> <tr> <td>April 2010 – March 2011</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April 2011 – March 2012</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April 2012 – March 2013</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April 2013 – March 2014</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April 2014 – March 2015</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>39</td> </tr> </table>	April 2010 – March 2011	8	April 2011 – March 2012	8	April 2012 – March 2013	8	April 2013 – March 2014	7	April 2014 – March 2015	8	TOTAL	39
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Number of children who have had a Special Educational Needs assessment

<p>AQW 45943/1 1-15</p>	<p>Mr Steve n Agne w (GPN - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail the number of children in each Education and Library Board area which have had a request for statutory assessment for Special Educational Needs (i) rejected; and (ii) undertaken in each of the last three years.</p> <p>The Education Authority has advised that the number of requests for statutory assessment of special educational needs which have been (i) accepted and (ii) declined by the Education and Library Boards over the last three years is as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="419 772 1441 1413"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th colspan="2">Apr 2012 - Mar 2013</th> <th colspan="2">Apr 2013 – Mar 2014</th> <th colspan="2">Apr 2014 - Mar 2015</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>Accepted</th> <th>Declined</th> <th>Accepted</th> <th>Declined</th> <th>Accepted</th> <th>Declined</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>BELB</td> <td>429</td> <td>13</td> <td>474</td> <td>11</td> <td>369</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NEELB</td> <td>366</td> <td>80</td> <td>412</td> <td>122</td> <td>522</td> <td>87</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SEELB</td> <td>521</td> <td>113</td> <td>529</td> <td>130</td> <td>687</td> <td>135</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SELB</td> <td>458</td> <td>57</td> <td>420</td> <td>83</td> <td>551</td> <td>58</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WELB</td> <td>430</td> <td>95</td> <td>386</td> <td>113</td> <td>452</td> <td>137</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTALS</td> <td>2204</td> <td>358</td> <td>2221</td> <td>459</td> <td>2581</td> <td>431</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Apr 2012 - Mar 2013		Apr 2013 – Mar 2014		Apr 2014 - Mar 2015			Accepted	Declined	Accepted	Declined	Accepted	Declined	BELB	429	13	474	11	369	14	NEELB	366	80	412	122	522	87	SEELB	521	113	529	130	687	135	SELB	458	57	420	83	551	58	WELB	430	95	386	113	452	137	TOTALS	2204	358	2221	459	2581	431
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Department of Education action to address bullying in schools

<p>AQW 45880/11- 15</p>	<p>Mr Alex Easton (DUP - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education how his Department is addressing bullying in schools.</p> <p>The Department works in partnership with schools and other stakeholders to tackle bullying in a broad, holistic manner.</p> <p>At primary level, as part of the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding area of learning, all children are encouraged to develop an awareness and understanding of their own and others' feelings and emotions and of how their actions affect others. They are also taught strategies and skills for keeping themselves healthy and safe.</p> <p>At post-primary level, the Learning for Life and Work area of learning teaches</p>
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		<p>young people to develop strategies to promote personal safety including learning about different forms of bullying. At Key Stage 4 this includes understanding of how pupils can maximise and sustain their own health and well-being.</p> <p>The Department has produced guidance for schools in developing effective anti-bullying policies <u>which includes</u> practical initiatives and case studies to support schools to tackle bullying. The guidance “Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour” is available on the Department’s website at http://www.deni.gov.uk/ppbehaviour-4.pdf. The effectiveness of a school’s anti-bullying measures is monitored through the regular cycle of school inspections.</p> <p>My Department funds the local Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF), a grouping which brings together over 25 statutory and non-statutory organisations involved in tackling all forms of bullying. The Forum delivers awareness raising activities, such as the annual Anti-Bullying Week (ABW) and provides practical support, resources and guidance to schools, parents and pupils. In 2013 it released its own resource pack for schools “Effective responses to Bullying Behaviour” which highlighted best-practice and suggested a number of approaches which schools could use in responding to bullying incidents.</p> <p>The Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) has been accessible to young people of postprimary age in mainstream schools since September 2007 and to postprimary aged pupils in special schools from January 2011. This allows pupils to speak to a trained counsellor about their concerns or fears around bullying.</p> <p>The Department’s “iMatter” Programme is intended to support the entire school community to be engaged in promoting resilient emotional health for all pupils. Under the programme a suite of homework diary inserts and posters on topics of concern to young people such as self esteem and coping with stress, worry, anxiety and bullying, and outlining sources of help are prepared and distributed annually.</p>
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How DE is working with schools to address cyber bullying

<p>AQW 45822/11- 15</p>	<p>Mr Stephen Moutray (<i>DUP - Upper Bann</i>)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education how his Department is working with schools to address the problem of cyber bullying.</p> <p>Cyber-bullying is a complex problem and tackling it requires a multi-faceted approach. The Department is working to increase awareness of the problem, educate pupils about this issue and promote greater use of best-practice by schools in responding to cyber-bullying incidents.</p> <p>ICT is a compulsory cross-curricular skill and as part of this pupils receive</p>
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teaching on e-safety and acceptable online behaviour. At the school level, School Governors have responsibility for pupil welfare and all schools are required to have in place policies on the safe and effective use of the Internet and Digital technologies.

As part of the C2k managed ICT service, all schools use common eSafety services and have access to eSafety information and resources via a dedicated C2k eSafety Zone. C2k uses its 'News Desk' service to promote issues of online safety directly to pupils and provide links to relevant web resources. In May 2015, C2k, in conjunction with UK Safer Internet, will also run a series of eSafety Conferences which will include the issue of cyber bullying. Over 400 school representatives are expected to attend.

The Department funds the local Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF), which aims to tackling cyber-bullying through its own awareness raising activities, such as the annual Anti-Bullying Week (ABW), and by providing practical support, resources and guidance to schools, parents and pupils. The Forum makes a range of anti-bullying resources, including some on cyber-bullying, available through its website. It also developed and distributed a school resource pack, "Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour", which highlights best-practice for schools to follow.

As part of its 2015-16 work programme, DE has asked NIABF to update its cyber-bullying resources and prepare an insert for the "Effective Responses" resource pack to provide specific guidance for schools on cyber-bullying. This will also take account of the ongoing work of the Safeguarding Board for NI (SBNI) on this issue.

Parental request for Special Educational Needs assessments

<p>AQW 45722/1 1-15</p>	<p>Mr Steve n Agne w (GPN - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Education to detail the number of parental requests for statutory assessment for Special Educational Needs which have been (i) denied; and (ii) accepted by Education and Library Boards in each of the last three years.</p> <p>The Education Authority has advised that the number of parental requests for statutory assessment of special educational needs which have been (i) accepted and (ii) declined by the Education and Library Boards over the last three years is as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="416 808 1437 1451"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th colspan="2">Apr 2012 - Mar 2013</th> <th colspan="2">Apr 2013 – Mar 2014</th> <th colspan="2">Apr 2014 - Mar 2015</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>Accepted</th> <th>Declined</th> <th>Accepted</th> <th>Declined</th> <th>Accepted</th> <th>Declined</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>BELB</td> <td>31</td> <td>7</td> <td>24</td> <td>8</td> <td>34</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NEELB</td> <td>40</td> <td>57</td> <td>41</td> <td>66</td> <td>54</td> <td>61</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SEELB</td> <td>28</td> <td>35</td> <td>17</td> <td>49</td> <td>17</td> <td>62</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SELB</td> <td>16</td> <td>1</td> <td>5</td> <td>13</td> <td>19</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WELB</td> <td>9</td> <td>5</td> <td>4</td> <td>6</td> <td>5</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTALS</td> <td>124</td> <td>105</td> <td>91</td> <td>142</td> <td>129</td> <td>154</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Apr 2012 - Mar 2013		Apr 2013 – Mar 2014		Apr 2014 - Mar 2015			Accepted	Declined	Accepted	Declined	Accepted	Declined	BELB	31	7	24	8	34	10	NEELB	40	57	41	66	54	61	SEELB	28	35	17	49	17	62	SELB	16	1	5	13	19	12	WELB	9	5	4	6	5	9	TOTALS	124	105	91	142	129	154
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TOTALS	124	105	91	142	129	154																																																				

Funding of Voluntary Exit Scheme

<p>AQW 45850/11- 15</p>	<p>Mr Samuel Gardiner MBE (UUP - Upper Bann)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Finance and Personnel does the Executive have the flexibility to use £700 million of capital borrowing to fund a Voluntary Exit Scheme and can her Department detail the estimated time-scale for the Scheme in 2015/16. [Priority Written]</p> <p>The Stormont House Agreement provided the Executive with flexibility to use £700 million of capital borrowing over the next four years to fund a voluntary exit scheme. As access to this funding forms part of the Stormont House Agreement, it is critical that there is sufficient progress on implementation of Welfare Reform to ensure the Executive can access this funding.</p> <p>At this stage it appears the £200 million for year one will be oversubscribed.</p>
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First allocations are due to be agreed by the Executive as part of June monitoring (subject to Welfare Reform and subsequently an Executive Budget being agreed).

Work has continued pending, budgetary agreement, based upon the need to make progress within previously agreed timescales.

Current waiting times for an autism assessment

AQW
46004/
11-15

Mr
Ross
Hussey
(UUP
-
West
Tyron
e)

To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current waiting time for an autism assessment in each Health and Social Care Trust.

The figures requested are not held centrally and have been sourced from the Health and Social Care (HSC) Board. Table 1 overleaf details waiting times at, 30th April 2015, for children waiting for an assessment for autism by HSC Trust and length of time waiting.

HSC Trust	Length of time waiting								Total
	0 – 4 weeks	> 4 – 8 weeks	> 8 – 13 weeks	> 13 – 18 weeks	> 18 – 26 weeks	> 26 – 39 weeks	> 39 – 52 weeks	> 52 weeks	
Belfast	43	47	69	40	106	138	160	78	681
Northern	52	57	76	69	82	50	15	0	401
South Eastern	22	25	13	24	30	14	0	0	128
Southern	11	13	10	0	0	0	0	0	34
Western	44	21	39	28	52	21	0	0	205
Total	172	163	207	161	270	223	175	78	1,449

Source: HSC Board

Please note these figures have not been validated by the Department; figures

refer to those aged 0 -17

Future of Cottage Children's Respite facility in Derry

<p>AQW 45999/11- 15</p>	<p>Mr Fearghal McKinney (<i>SDLP - South Belfast</i>)</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>The Western Health and Social Care Trust's review of its respite services has been extended until after the summer holiday period. This will ensure further engagement with all of the key stakeholders in respect of the proposed service model.</p>
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Support for young people from North Down with a mental health problem

<p>AQW 45883/11- 15</p>	<p>Mr Peter Weir (<i>DUP - North Down</i>)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what departmental support is available for young people from North Down with a mental health problem.</p> <p>Services of this nature are commissioned by the Health and Social Care Board and delivered by the Trusts.</p> <p>Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in Northern Ireland are provided through a stepped care model, based on the clinical needs of the individual. Services are provided by four CAMHS teams, with Belfast HSC Trust providing services to both the Belfast and South Eastern HSC Trust areas, including North Down.</p> <p>Inpatient care for young people, when required, is provided in Beechcroft, the Regional Child and Adolescent Inpatient Mental Health Unit at the Forster Green Hospital site in Belfast.</p> <p>CAMHS in the North Down area are provided by a local community-based team in James Street, Newtownards. This is a multidisciplinary team which specialises in the assessment and intervention for under 18s with mental health needs, and their families/carers.</p> <p>Services for children and young people presenting in crisis, and requiring assessment and intervention within 24-48 hours, are provided by a mobile Crisis Assessment Intervention Team, available 7 days per week to GPs and Emergency Departments.</p> <p>There are also specialist services for young people with eating disorders or drug and alcohol issues. A number of voluntary sector organisations also provide</p>
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support to young people with mental health problems.

Waiting times for children with suspected autism

AQW
45508/
11-15

Mr
Chris
Lyttle
(APN
I -
East
Belfast)

To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current waiting times for (i) assessment; (ii) diagnosis; and (iii) treatment of children following a referral for suspected autism spectrum disorder.

The information requested is not held centrally and was requested from the Health and Social Care (HSC) Board. In line with ministerial standards, the HSC Board monitors waiting times for the commencement of assessments and the commencement of intervention post diagnosis. The HSC Board does not currently monitor diagnostic waiting times.

Table 1 below details the number of patients waiting for an assessment for autism at 31 March 2015 by HSC Trust and length of time waiting

Table 1

HSC Trust	Length of time waiting								Total
	0 – 4 weeks	4 – 8 weeks	8 – 13 weeks	13 – 18 weeks	18 – 26 weeks	26 – 39 weeks	39 – 52 weeks	>52 weeks	
Belfast	45	59	47	63	92	147	166	44	663
Northern	67	65	72	63	64	46	0	0	377
South Eastern	23	14	31	21	34	5	0	0	128
Southern	9	12	3	0	0	0	0	0	24
Western	21	36	32	33	51	18	0	0	191
Total	165	186	185	180	241	216	166	44	1,383

Source: HSC Board

Please note these figures have not been validated by the Department

Table 2 below details the number of patients waiting for treatment/intervention following a diagnosis of autism at 31 March 2015 by HSC Trust and length of time waiting.

EQIA on gender imbalance of social work staff

<p>AQW 45394/11- 15</p>	<p>Mr Trevor Lunn (APNI - Lagan Valley)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether an equality impact assessment has been completed in relation to gender imbalance of social work staff employed in each Health and Social Care Trust's (i) Family Intervention teams; (ii) Central Gateway teams; and (iii) Court Children's Services teams.</p> <p>HSC Trusts have confirmed that they have not completed Equality Impact Assessments in relation to gender within social work staff.</p> <p>Social work, in common with the other caring professions, tends to attract more women than men. Initiatives have been undertaken, on occasion, to try to increase the proportion of male applicants to professional social work training courses, with limited success.</p> <p>Currently around 19% of the registrants on the Social Care Register are men.</p>
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Service provision for young people with drug addiction

<p>AQW 45318/11- 15</p>	<p>Mr Steven Agnew (GPNI - North Down)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action is being taken to increase service provision for people under the age of 18 who require help with drug addiction.</p> <p>It is important to note that research shows that the majority of young people who use substances are not addicted or physically/psychologically dependant. That is not to say they do not experience difficulties or harms related to their substance misuse, however they therefore require a different level of clinical response than adults who are dependant. Those young people who use drugs or alcohol problematically are likely to be vulnerable and experiencing a range of problems, of which substance misuse is one.</p> <p>There is a range of general services provided across all sectors responding to the needs of children, young people and families. All the Health and Social Care Trusts provide family support services and work in partnership with voluntary and community sector organisations to support the prevention and early intervention agenda, including the need to reduce and minimise the significant harm caused by both legal and illegal use of drugs and alcohol. The range of organisations providing family support services is listed in the Family Support website which can be accessed at www.familysupportni.gov.uk.</p> <p>Young people may also require specialist substance misuse services, ranging</p>
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from information, education and awareness raising through to treatment and support. Under our alcohol and drug strategy, the New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs Phase 2, a range of services covering these tiers of response is commissioned across Northern Ireland and these are outlined on the Public Health Agency Website at: <http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/drug-and-alcohol-directories-services>. The PHA is currently in the process of re-tendering for a range of services and these are due to come on-stream in July 2015.

Waiting list for Autism diagnosis

AQW
45072/11-
15

Mr Fearghal
McKinney
(SDLP -
South
Belfast)

To ask the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for a breakdown of the number of children on waiting lists for diagnosis for Autism Spectrum Disorder, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust area.

Table 1 below contains a breakdown of the number of children on waiting lists for a diagnosis for Autism Spectrum Disorder by Health and Social Care Trust area at 31 March 2015.

Table 1

Health and Social Care Trust area	No. of Children
Belfast	663
Northern	377
South Eastern	128
Southern	24
Western	191
Total	1,383