NICCY Summary: Written Assembly Questions week ending 16 October, 2015

T:BUC – Summer Camps

AQW 48602/11-16	Mr Trevor Lunn (APNI - Lagan Valley)	**To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) for an update on the number of summer camps and summer school programmes which took place in 2015 as referenced in Together: Building a United Community; and (ii) to detail the target for the number of summer camps and summer school programmes due to take place during 2016.**
		Funding for Summer Camp Pilots was offered to 113 applicants and, to date, 105 of these applicants have accepted their offer. As at the end of August 75 camps have been held with the remaining 30 scheduled to take place before the end of November.
		An evaluation of the Pilot Programme has been commissioned and plans are in place to hold Shared Learning Forums and recommence the co-design process to ensure that learning from the 2015 Pilot Programme is taken forward in any future Summer Camp Programme. Final decisions regarding a Programme in 2016 have therefore not yet been taken.

Maintenance Payments

AQO 8836/11-16	Mr Joe Byrne (SDLP - West Tyrone)	**To ask the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on Education Maintenance Allowance payments made to young people who recently enrolled on European Social Fund funded youth education projects.**
		The payment of allowances to European Social Fund participants is eligible only through a Project Promoter's 40% indirect costs.

		No other separate sources of Departmental funding are available to cover allowances, such as the Educational Maintenance Allowance. Due to severe budget restraints in my Department, I am regrettably unable to provide any financial resource for the payment of Educational Maintenance Allowances within European Social Fund projects. I will, however, continue to keep this matter under review should available financial resources become available.

United Youth

AQO 8827/11-16	Ms Caitríona Ruane *(SF - South Down)*	**To ask the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline the 13 United Youth Programme pilots.** United Youth is a transformational good relations programme that aims to provide flexible, high-quality, young-person-centred opportunities for 16–24 year olds who are not in education, employment or training. There are four key outcome areas, in the form of capabilities the young people should be supported to develop via engagement with United Youth: personal development, good relations, citizenship and employability. There are 13 United Youth pilots being delivered by 12 lead organisations along with 17 partner organisations. The full list is available on the DEL website. There is a good spread of pilots across Northern Ireland, including coverage in both urban and rural areas, providing up to 360 places for young people to participate in a range of activities between August 2015 and March 2016. Each pilot represents a different approach to tackling the four outcome areas. The purpose of the pilot phase is to test the

		different approaches, as well as the suitability of the outcomes themselves, with a view to developing a service design framework for the United Youth Programme post 2015/16.

European Social Fund Opportunities

AQW 49275/11-16	Ms Claire Sugden *(IND - East Londonderry)*	**To ask the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the opportunities available under the European Social Fund for young people who are not in education, employment or training to achieve GCSE, or equivalent, qualifications.** The European Social Fund (ESF) 2014-2020 programme objectives are to combat poverty; enhance social inclusion by reducing economic inactivity; and increase the skills base of those currently in work and future potential participants in the workforce. The Programme is designed to reach those people furthest from the labour market, at risk of social exclusion, and young people from marginalised communities who require additional support. The Programme provides participants with a range of support including training, mentoring and pre-employment activities. Decisions regarding the level of qualifications to be supported under ESF-funded projects were informed by a range of connected Departmental policy reviews, including the review of Youth Training. Progression is a key component of the 2014-2020 ESF Programme. It is for this reason, that I took the decision to support provision up to Level 1 under the Programme. This means that individuals are enabled and encouraged to progress to Level 2 qualifications

		and above through other Departmental provision such as Further Education; Apprenticeships NI; or Steps to Success.
		Account was also taken of the acute need to minimise duplication between programmes funded by my Department. This was particularly important within the context of the current budget constraints being faced by my Department.

NEETS

AQW 49212/11-16	Ms Claire Sugden *(IND - East Londonderry)*	**To ask the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) to detail the current data sources which provide information on young people who are not in education, employment or training; (ii) to detail how this data is disaggregated to identify and confirm specific characteristics; and (iii) for his assessment of the parameters of employment and training as specific to this definition.**
		The main data sources which provide information on young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) are the Labour Force Survey and the 2011 census data. In addition, there are a number of government surveys which, when pooled together, yield information on young people who are employed, unemployed or economically inactive.
		The Department of Education school census yields information on young people in education, as does the further education college database and the higher education institution databases (higher education information is provided by the Higher Education Statistics Agency which comes to my officials for further analysis).

These data sources hold different types of information such as gender, age, subject studied, etc. This range of data allows these characteristics to be cross-referenced with each other. The census information contains much more detailed background information on the family structure and household characteristics in which the young person lives. The Labour Force Survey source only contains information on the gender of the individual and whether or not they are unemployed or economically inactive. However, the Labour Force Survey information is updated quarterly.

The definition of NEET used in these analyses is a UK definition and conforms to the International Labour Organisation definition of employment and unemployment. The DFP/NISRA Labour Market Statistical Bulletin for October to December 2013 (published 28/2/2014) provides the following definition of a young person as being NEET:
"A person is defined as NEET if they are aged 16 to 24 and not in employment, education or training (full-time or part-time)."

Within the estimate, a person is considered to be in education or training (part-time or full-time) if they:
 are completing an apprenticeship;
are engaged on a Government employment or training programme;
are working or studying towards a qualification;
have had job-related training or education in the last four weeks; or,
are enrolled on an education course and are still attending or waiting for term to (re)start.

Therefore, anybody aged 16 to 24 who is not in the above forms of education or training (part-time or full-time) and who is not in employment, is considered to be

| | | NEET. The definition of "in employment", as recommended by the International Labour Organisation is anyone (aged 16 or over) who has done at least one hour's paid work in the week prior to interview, or has a job they are temporarily away from (e.g. on holiday).

Previous NEETs figures produced in relation to Northern Ireland included those aged 16 to 24 who were in part-time education. However, the Office of National Statistics (ONS) first published quarterly NEETs figures for the UK in May 2013, based on the above definition. This was the first time Northern Ireland NEETs figures had been published and in order to allow comparisons with the UK regions, the official ONS definition has been applied since then.

To enable the Northern Ireland Executive to compare its performance with other jurisdictions in addressing the NEET issue, there has to be consistency in the definitions used. |
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Internet safety

| AQW 49697/11-16 | Mr Sydney Anderson *(DUP - Upper Bann)* | **To ask the Minister of Education for his assessment of the effectiveness of internet safety education in schools.**

The cross-curricular skill of Using ICT plays a key role in the statutory curriculum. It includes educating pupils about internet safety and requires them to learn how to keep safe and to display acceptable online behaviour.

In schools, the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils is the responsibility of a school's Board of Governors and, in the exercise of those duties, schools are required to have in place policies on discipline, bullying and the safe and effective use of the Internet and Digital |
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technologies.

As with all areas of the curriculum, the specifics of what is taught and how it taught in any subject area is a matter for each teacher / school. Teachers and pupils are provided with extensive advice and support on e-safety via the C2k ICT managed service available to all grant-aided schools.

Drug and alcohol awareness

AQW 49695/11-16	Mr Sydney Anderson *(DUP - Upper Bann)*	**To ask the Minister of Education to detail the level of resources his Department has allocated to drug and alcohol awareness education in each of the last five academic years.** Legislation requires all schools to have in place a drugs education policy and the statutory curriculum, which is taught in all our grant-aided schools, provides opportunities for pupils to learn about drugs and alcohol issues. The Department has not allocated any resources specifically for alcohol and drugs awareness education. The Department's policy is to delegate as much funding and decision-making as possible to schools which are best placed to assess the needs of their pupils and it is up to schools to determine how they use their budget to deliver all aspects of the curriculum.

Autism

AQW 49650/11-16	Mr Fearghal McKinney *(SDLP - South Belfast)*	**To ask the Minister of Education what discussions has he had with Parents' Education as Autism Therapists Northern Ireland and Autism NI in relation to Special Educational Needs assessment times.** To date I have had no discussions with either Parents' Education as Autism Therapists or Autism NI in relation to

		special educational needs assessment times.
		However, during the Committee stage of the SEND Bill, Autism NI has provided both written and oral evidence. Autism NI and Parents' Education as Autism Therapists also provided a response to the original consultation.
		My policy proposal on the issue of improving the assessment time has been made clear, specifically for the Education Authority to conclude its work in relation to the creation of a final statement for a pupil in 20 weeks. At present the requirement is for the statement to be finalised in 26 weeks. This improvement in assessment time will be given effect via regulations, but first we need to ensure the SEN Bill is passed and then the Regulations will follow, and these Regulations will include the reduced timescales. It is a question of sequencing.
		The associated Regulations and the revised Code of Practice will also be subject to consultation. This will provide a further opportunity for key stakeholders, such as Autism NI and Parents' Education as Autism Therapists Northern Ireland, to present their views. I remain committed to ensuring that children have access to an appropriate education that supports them to achieve their full potential.

Unclaimed Free School Meals

AQW 49591/11-16	Mr Stephen Moutray *(DUP - Upper Bann)*	**To ask the Minister of Education to outline the number of pupils that did not claim free school meals in each of the last four years.**

The number of pupils that did not claim free school meals in each of the last four years is as follows:

Table 1. Number of pupils entitled to but not availing of a free school meal on the day of the School Meals Census; 2011/12 – 2014/15.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Pupils entitled to but not claiming a free school meal 1,2	15,512	14,865	15,905	18,546

Entitlement source: School Census
Uptake source: School Meals Census
The number of pupils not claiming a free school meal is calculated by subtracting the number of free school meals taken on Census day (uptake) from the number of pupils entitled to free school meals on the same day (entitlement).
Footnotes:

Special schools have been excluded from these figures as the free school meal entitlement data for 2011/12 to 2013/14 in special schools was not validated.
Pupils who are entitled to free school meals but who were absent from school on Census day or pupils present in school on Census day but not availing of a school midday break are included in the figures.

Free School Meals for all

AQW 49517/11-16	Mr Michael McGimpsey (UUP - South Belfast)	**To ask the Minister of Education whether he has any plans to introduce free school meals for all children as a method for addressing educational underachievement.**
		I have no plans to introduce free school meals (FSM) for all children as a method for addressing educational underachievement. FSM are provided to ensure that those children most in need have access to a nutritionally balanced meal suitable as the main meal of the day. FSM entitlement is used as a measure of social disadvantage and evidence indicates that socioeconomic status has an impact upon the overall attainment of school children. However, evidence does not indicate that introducing FSM for all children would be a cost effective or targeted approach to addressing educational underachievement.

Underachievement

AQW 49513/11-16	Mr Michael McGimpsey (UUP - South Belfast)	**To ask the Minister of Education how his Department plans to address the underachievement of local children identified by the latest research published by the Equality Commission; including (i) children in care; (ii) children with disabilities: (iii) boys from a protestant working class background; and (iv) children from an ethnic minority background.**
		Tackling inequalities in education is an issue which I take very seriously. Since coming to office I have been determined to take action to break the link between social disadvantage and educational underachievement wherever it exists. The policies and programmes I have in place are

realising improvements for our young people at Key Stage, GCSE and A-level. However, significant challenges remain and I will continue to focus on improvement and equity. We have the correct policies such as 'Every School a Good School' and the 'Literacy and Numeracy Strategy' in place and these are being implemented with renewed vigour.

I have provided additional resources to schools serving those most at risk of underachieving, through the weighting of school funding, and through targeted programmes such as Extended Schools, and Nurture Units. The Delivering Social Change Literacy and Numeracy Signature Project delivered tailored interventions to 18,000 young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, and I am determined that the legacy of the project is not lost.

The revised SEN and Inclusion framework aims to remove or reduce the barriers to learning faced by children with SEN and will work alongside my other policies aimed at addressing barriers to learning. It represents a more equitable framework in which all children with SEN should be able to get the support they need, in a timely manner.

However, addressing these inequalities is a multi-faceted, societal issue and one the education authorities and schools cannot tackle on their own. It requires the support of parents, businesses, communities, community leaders and community representatives. Families have a key role, and that is the message behind my 'Education Works' campaign that highlights the vital role parents can play in helping their child do well at school and improve their life chances.

Keeping Safe

AQW 49423/11-16	Mr Alex Easton (DUP - North Down)	**To ask the Minister of Education for his assessment of how the Keeping Safe programme and Stranger Danger will help keep children safe.** My Department has commissioned NSPCC to develop and implement the Preventative Education project entitled "Keeping Safe" which has the safety of children at its core. During the research phase of the project, significant gaps were identified in children's knowledge, understanding and ability to keep safe. This was particularly notable in relation to children's role in domestic abuse and inappropriate physical contact from someone known to the child. The ultimate aim of the project is therefore to ensure schools are resourced and supported to engage effectively in teaching 'keeping safe' messages to children by ensuring that: Teachers have the necessary skills to teach about sensitive subjects, including child abuse, domestic violence and sexual abuse; Teachers will be alert to pupils experiencing distress and trained to respond appropriately; Teachers will have access to a range of age appropriate and evaluated resources to support the teaching of sensitive subjects; and The final report project, due in 2018, will therefore inform the Department's strategic approach to the implementation of an effective preventative curriculum across the primary sector. The Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) has in place a number of resources that reference stranger danger which are available for all teachers via the curriculum website, www.nicurriculum.org.uk. However, decisions on the specific content of their curriculum and the resources or programmes they use to deliver the curriculum are a matter for each school/teacher.

Integrated Education

AQW 49414/11-16	Mr Steven Agnew *(GPNI - North Down)*	**To ask the Minister of Education whether a Grant Maintained Integrated School and a Controlled Integrated school that work together be funded by the Shared Education Programme.** Two integrated schools sharing are unlikely to meet the criteria of schools from different sectors, but each application will be judged on its merits. Such an application would have to demonstrate what the additional educational and reconciliation benefits would be to both of the partnering schools. This information was provided in response to your previous question AQW 44568/11-15 in April 2015. See www.sepni.gov.uk for application guidance and details, which was provided in the response to your previous questions (AQW 42863/11-15 and AQW 48748/11-15).

AQW 49365/11-16	Mr Steven Agnew *(GPNI - North Down)*	**To ask the Minister of Education to detail (i) the number of applications to integrated schools; and (ii) how many of those applications were turned down due to over subscription, in each of the last five years.** The numbers of first preference applications to Primary and Post-Primary Integrated schools over the last five years are listed in the tables below, alongside the number of approved places. **Primary Integrated School Statistics**

School Year	Total number of approved admissions places	Total number of 1st preference applications
2015/16	1584	1458

2014/15	1573	1514
2013/14	1485	1416
2012/13	1544	1375
2011/12	1455	1333

Post-Primary Integrated School Statistics

School Year	Total number of approved admissions places	Total number of 1st preference applications
2015/16	2131	1953
2014/15	2151	1904
2013/14	2116	1768
2012/13	2096	1717
2011/12	2096	1840

Information on the number of applications that were turned down is not held in a format that would be easily accessible. Such information could only be compiled at a disproportionate cost.

Information on first preference applications has been provided by the Education Authority.

Sure Start

AQW 49255/11-16	Mr Phil Flanagan *(SF - Fermanagh and South Tyrone)*	**To ask the Minister of Education what consideration he has given to the universal provision of Sure Start for children under 4 years old.** The final report on the Independent Review of Sure Start has been issued to all key stakeholders and published on the DE website. I have considered the report and provided direction to my officials regarding implementation of the findings. An Implementation Group, consisting of DE representatives and Childcare Partnership Managers was established in August 2015 to take forward the Review recommendations, in conjunction with relevant stakeholders with a target implementation date of March 2016. Supporting Early Years education is a key priority because of the evidence that children benefit most from school if they have been supported to learn and engage with the world around them from birth. It is recognised that early intervention for children living in disadvantaged areas can have a significant impact. The Sure Start Programme is targeted towards children in the 20% most deprived areas, and I have been able to expand these services into the 25% most deprived areas, significantly increasing the annual funding to around £25million. In times of constrained finances it is increasingly important to ensure that money is spent on activities which are helping to secure improved well-being and developmental outcomes for children and families in the most disadvantaged areas. While funding is not available to provide universal provision, findings from the independent review of Sure Start, together with existing research, provide reassurance that our targeting of available resource in areas of highest

		deprivation is likely to have greatest impact on those children and families that can benefit most from Sure Start services.