

Children and Young People's Strategy - Monthly Update

May 2017

The Children and Young People's Strategy Team in the Department of Education is continuing to develop the new Executive Strategy for Children and Young People. Some of the work carried out in recent months includes:

Public Consultation

The public consultation for the Executive Strategy for Children and Young People launched on 19 December 2016 and ran until 31 March 2017.

In response to the consultation, the Department received 184 written responses, with a further 76 responses received via online questionnaire.

During the consultation period the Department and its partner organisations consulted directly with over 460 adults, children and young people. Engagement took place through:

- Public consultation workshops held across Northern Ireland;
- Engagement events, specifically for children and young people, facilitated by Participation Network (more information on engagement with children and young people is provided below);
- Focus groups and one-to-one discussions with parents, facilitated by Parenting NI;
- Focus groups and meetings with partner organisations in the statutory, community and voluntary sectors on a range of topics including the challenges faced by:
 - Looked-after and care-experienced children;
 - Children and young people with disabilities,
 - Children and young people with mental health issues;
 - Black and Minority Ethnic (BME), traveller and newcomer children;
 - Children and young people experiencing domestic violence;

- Children and young people experiencing family breakdown; and
- Children and young people experiencing homelessness.

Consultation with Children and Young People

Critical to the development of the new Executive Strategy for Children and Young People is hearing what children and young people have to say about the issues that affect them most, and their views on how the issues can perhaps be addressed.

As part of the public consultation on the Strategy, Participation Network hosted six engagement events exclusively for children and young people. Through these events 108 children and young people (aged 12-23) from across Northern Ireland were able to actively participate in the consultation and give the Department their feedback on the draft Strategy.

Analysis of Public Consultation responses

The Children and Young People's Strategy Team, working closely with Departmental statisticians and staff from the Centre for Effective Services, is presently undertaking a thorough analysis of the responses to the public consultation.

Following the analysis of the consultation responses, a Consultation Response Report will be prepared and published online.

What will happen next?

In the coming months, the Children and Young People's Strategy Team will be focusing on the following key areas:

- Continued analysis of the responses to the public consultation;
- Publication of a Consultation Response Report;
- Drafting the final strategy (in response to the public consultation) for Executive agreement and laying in the Assembly when convened;

- Development of, and consultation on, the Children and Young People's Implementation/Delivery Plan
- Development of monitoring and reporting mechanisms;
- Further work on the Data Development Agenda; and
- Development of the Strategy management structures, including ongoing participation with children and young people, parents, stakeholders and academia.

If you would like to find out more about the development of the Executive Strategy for Children and Young People, please contact the Children and Young People's Strategy Team:

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