

**SECTION 75, THE NORTHERN IRELAND ACT 1998
(THE EQUALITY DUTIES)**



**ANNUAL REPORT:
1 April 2008 – 31 March 2009**

**Southern Education and Library Board's
Annual Progress Report 2008 2009**

Section 75

THE NORTHERN IRELAND ACT 1998

(THE EQUALITY DUTIES)

Signed on behalf of the Board by Mr A P Murphy

Chief Executive

21st December 2009

Southern Education and Library Board's Annual Progress Report 2008 - 2009

Executive Summary

This Annual Report records the activities undertaken by the Board in furtherance of its equality obligations. It covers the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009.

Key Developments:-

- The Board completed a pilot exercise which involved collecting information from children and young people with disabilities on their experiences of the school system; reviewed the findings of the pilot and developed an on-line survey which was on-going at the year's end (paragraph 11(b) refers).
- The Board chaired an Inter-Board Working Group which completed a proposal for the management and delivery of a new regional service for Traveller Education. This proposal has been approved by the five Boards and submitted to the Department of Education for their consideration. (Paragraph 10(c) refers).
- Equality input to the Education Skills Authority Implementation Team (ESAIT) and the Northern Library Authority Implementation Team (NILAIT), Review of Public Administration, Human Resources Project Work (Paragraph 11(a) refers).
- Draft policies prepared for consideration by legacy organisations, ESAIT and trade unions on terms and conditions for new recruits, for example Equal Opportunities and Work Life Balance Policies and Procedures. (Paragraphs 6 and 11(a) refer).
- Two major seminars organised under the auspices of the Joint Consultative Forum on the Review of Public Administration and Inequalities in Education. (Paragraph 9(b) refers).
- On-going EQIAs - One completed and one at Stage 5 of the process. (Paragraph 3(b) refers).

Main Activities Planned for 2009/2010:-

- Assist ESAIT in the development of an Equality Scheme and Equality and Disability Action Plan;
- Complete and publish the findings of the Disability Survey;
- Publish the results of the EQIA 'Implementation of the Job Evaluation Schemes';
- Progress the proposal for a regional service for a Traveller Education Support Service (Paragraph 10(c) refers);
- Pilot the new Diversity Training programme with 4 schools in the Southern board area;
- Conduct a final review of the Board's Equality Scheme and Interim Disability Action Plan.

INTRODUCTION

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (“the Act”) requires public authorities to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. The Southern Education and Library Board is fully committed to the fulfilment of the Section 75 obligations imposed by the Act and its Equality Scheme, approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland on the 15th March 2001. This Annual Report, which records the activities undertaken by the Board in furtherance of its equality obligations, covers the period 1 April 2008 - 31 March 2009. The Report will be published on the Board’s website at www.selb.org.

CONTEXT

1. Review of Public Administration

On 22 November 2005, following the Review of Public Administration (RPA), Government announced details for the rationalisation and modernisation of the present Local Government, Health Bodies and Education administration structures. The key proposal for education was the formation of a new Education and Skills Authority (ESA) and a new Northern Ireland Library Authority (NILA). Initially it was planned that these bodies would be established by 1 April 2008. This was subsequently changed to 1 April 2009. The new library authority, known as ‘Libraries NI’ was established on 1 April 2009, the implementation timetable for the establishment of ESA was revised to 1 January 2010.

The outcomes of the Review Public Administration will have a major impact on the work of the Boards/Staff Commission with a priority being to assist the Department of Education, ESAIT, NILAIT and the other stakeholders to help achieve the objectives of the RPA. The Department of Education has formed an ESA Transition Board to provide leadership and direction on convergence issues and ensure a successful transition to ESA while continuing to deliver key services effectively. The five Chief Executives of the Education and Library Boards are members of the Transition Board.

Meetings between the Minister of Education, Caitriona Ruane, and the Chairpersons of RPA affected groups are held on a regular basis. The aim of these meetings is for the Minister to engage with the Chairpersons of the groups, providing them with briefing on RPA developments, discussing the best way of engaging the organisations involved and examining jointly the issues faced in maintaining service continuity during the transition period. The Board’s Chairperson is a member of this Forum. The minutes of Forum meetings can be viewed on the ESAIT website at www.esani.gov.uk.

Other structures have been put in place including a HR Forum established by both ESAIT and NILAIT. The Boards and Staff Commission are represented on these fora by H R professionals. During the year ESAIT established an Equality Duties Group to consider the equality issues for ESAIT and the development of an equality strategy for ESA, including a draft Equality Scheme and Equality and Disability Action Plan. All the legacy organisations in education affected by the RPA are represented on this Group.

2. New Disability Duties

Due to the exceptional circumstances arising as a result of RPA the Equality Commission had granted an exemption to the Boards/Staff Commission from the requirements to produce a disability action plan. Each Board is still subject to the general duty to have due regard to the need to fulfil the above duties when carrying out its functions. Under the

terms of this exemption the Board undertook to implement a programme of work and to submit to the Equality Commission a report on progress made in fulfilling these duties. The Board's progress report on this work is contained in Appendix 1.

1. STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECTION 75 EQUALITY DUTIES

The Chief Executive is responsible to the Board for ensuring that the Board fully complies with its Equality Scheme. Each member of the Senior Management Team is responsible to the Chief Executive for ensuring that his/her Business Units fully comply with the Equality Scheme. Operational responsibility for the implementation of the Scheme rests with the Adviser for Equality, Rights and Social Inclusion, Mr Kieran Shields.

To encourage a corporate approach and the mainstreaming of equality considerations into the Board's policy-making process the following arrangements apply:-

- Objectives and targets relating to the statutory duty are incorporated into the Board's Corporate and Business Plans;
- Equality objectives are built into the performance targets of relevant staff and thereafter are reflected in the annual review/appraisal process;
- Progress reports on the implementation of the Equality Scheme are provided to the Board;
- Equality issues are considered at meetings of the Board's Senior Management Team and the Equality Group and the Corporate and Staff Development Group.

The Board has continued to work in partnership with the other Boards and the Staff Commission, which has co-ordinated work on the implementation of the Equality Scheme on an inter-Board basis. Progress on the implementation of the Board's Equality Scheme is a standard item of business on the agenda for the monthly meetings of the Boards' Chief Administrative Officers. The Board is also represented on the ESAIT's Equality Duties Group which comprises representatives from all the legacy organisations in education affected by the RPA. A report on this work is contained at 11(a).

2. SCREENING

New Policies Screened

A supplementary report on new policies screened during the period 2007 – 2008 was issued to consultees on the 20 October 2008. For the period April 2008 – March 2009 there were no new policies screened within SELB and the inter-board position is as detailed below:

Inter-Board

Policy: Provisional Criteria for Initiating Statutory Assessments of Special Educational Need and for Making Statement of Special Educational Need

An inter-Board Screening Panel has recommended an EQIA of the above policy with screening due to be completed May 2009 and consultation due to take place on the screening decision.

Intra-Board

A supplementary report on new policies screened during this period will be issued to consultees.

3. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EQIA)

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Programme

(a) Department of Education led EQIAs

The Department has been developing a Policy Code to provide clarity on policies, how they should be delivered and the outcomes they are intended to achieve. It is hoped that the Code will inform discussions between the Department and the Equality Commission to ensure that existing policies continue to meet the requirements of equality of opportunity and good relations. During the year the Department consulted on the screening and the Equality Impact Assessment of policies on a “rolling basis”.

(b) Inter-Board/Staff Commission led EQIAs

During the reporting year the following progress was made:-

Policy: Registration and Grant Aid Schemes for Local Voluntary Youth Groups

This EQIA is at Stage 6 of the process. The results of this EQIA, which included an Action Plan, were published in November 2008. Considerable progress has been made on the implementation of the findings of this EQIA to the extent that a regional approach is now in place for the registration and administration of grant aid applications. However, a significant challenge has arisen for the Boards in trying to reconcile individual Board funding requirements and what are likely to be ESA requirements in terms of a regional approach to the allocation of grant aid. The Boards are not in a position to commit resources on behalf of ESA but are also mindful that when ESA is established a common approach to such funding would need to be put in place. For this reason the Boards have asked ESAIT to facilitate a ‘roundtable discussion’ to consider how best this policy should be progressed. At the time of writing this report ESAIT has accepted the need for such a discussion but indicated that because of a number of other considerations, including the need to appoint the Directors for ESA, it be deferred until later in the year.

Policy: Implementation of the Job Evaluation Schemes

This EQIA is at Stage 5 of the process. A consultation exercise was conducted on this inter-Board EQIA. As a result of issues raised in the course of this consultation process the Boards concluded that the EQIA should be reviewed. A review of this EQIA was conducted and a revised EQIA was issued for consultation in March 2009. The closing date for receipt of comments is 20 May 2009.

Ongoing EQIA Monitoring Activities – April 2008 – March 2009

(c) Progress Report on the Implementation of Actions as a result of the EQIA “Electronic Libraries for Northern Ireland (ELFNI)”

The Electronic Libraries for Northern Ireland programme has established an Intelligent Customer Unit (ICU) to manage the services on behalf of the 5 Education and Library Boards. A major function of the ICU has been to ensure a robust Benefits Realisation Process is established and as part of that objectives have been set in line with the result of the ELFNI Equality Impact assessment. This process is monitored by the ELFNI Contract Executive.

An update of progress on actions to date as a result of this EQIA is attached in Appendix 2. The library function, (with the exception of the schools’ library service),

and staff transferred to Libraries NI on the 31 March 2009, paragraph 1 refers. This function, with the above exception, is no longer covered under the Education and Library Boards' Equality Scheme.

(d) Work-life Balance Policies

The findings of this review have been fully implemented.

(e) An Alternative Model of Library Provision in Sion Mills (WELB).

(f) PPP Programme (BELB).

Planned EQIAs

Provisional Criteria for Initiating Statutory Assessments of Special Educational Need and for Making Statement of Special Educational Need

The aim of this policy is to make explicit the ways in which Boards will put the guidance from the Code of Practice (COP) on the identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs with reference to the initiating of statutory assessments of special educational need and for making statements of special educational need.

Since 1998 the five Boards have applied guidance from the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Education Needs (Department of Education, 1998) (Code of Practice) when making decisions about conducting Statutory Assessments and arranging special educational provision. While adhering to the same guidance it has been the case that each Board has been responsible for developing and applying its own criteria for initiating a statutory assessment of a child's special educational need (SEN). While in practice Boards have liaised closely in relation to this important matter with the result that the criteria used have, in most cases, been similar across Boards it has been recognised that certain differences have developed over a period of time. This policy, in bringing a consistency of practice across all five Boards, is intended to positively impact on the five Boards' obligation to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity.

Since work began on the policy the Department of Education has embarked on a Review of Special Educational Needs and Inclusion. At the time of completion of the policy this review has still to be published for consultation. It is anticipated that the outcome of the review will have a major impact on this policy. The criteria which are detailed in the Board's policy have therefore been termed 'provisional' in recognition that they may require amendment should legislative changes be proposed as an outcome of the review.

As noted above the policy brings a consistency of practice across all five Boards and as such is intended to positively impact on the five Boards' obligation to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity. This intention is further underlined within the policy with the inclusion of guidance to assist in making decisions about those pupils whose primary needs do not meet the individual criteria but whose needs are showing a complex interaction and may be a significant barrier to their learning and to accessing the curriculum.

In emphasising the positive dimensions of the policy it is recognised that it will have significant impact on those affected by it and there may be differential impacts related to gender, race, age and disability that require further consideration. It is therefore

recommended that the policy should be subject to a full impact assessment. Given the linkage between the criteria and the Department of Education's overarching special educational needs policy it is the view of the Screening Panel that the EQIA should be conducted on a partnership basis with the Department, known as the co-joined approach to conducting an EQIA.

4. TRAINING

Because of the focus on the RPA implementation there were limited training developments linked to the implementation of the Board's Equality Scheme.

Disability Awareness

In the context of the implementation of the interim disability action plan and the roll-out of the survey to collect information from children and young people with disabilities on their experiences of the school system there was a series of briefings for Principals and Board Officers on the Disability Duties and the survey.

Equality Awareness - Section 75

During the year equality awareness programmes for new and existing staff continued. The Board has continued a development programme with Together For All and the Belong Project which aims to produce and pilot a new diversity training programme for teaching and non-teaching staff alike. SELB staff members from the Equality, Rights and Social Inclusion Unit have been involved in curriculum development, training materials development and consultations with external trainers from Trademark and MacAulay Associates with a view to testing the new approach in the academic year 2009/2010.

Equality Awareness - Recruitment and Selection

On an inter-Board basis there were three training sessions for new panel members (32 participants). This training included guidance on the provisions of the Code, the Boards' Equal Opportunities Policy and the legislative provisions related to the promotion of equality of opportunity, equality awareness and good practice as it relates to recruitment and selection.

5. COMMUNICATION

The methods used to communicate progress on the implementation of our Equality Scheme during this period were as follows:-

- Regular reports to Board members.
- Reports on progress to the Joint Consultative Forum and those on our Equality Scheme lists;
- Face to face contacts through consultation events; and
- Information published on our website.

The impact/success of the approach adopted by the Boards/Staff Commission has been positive. The community/voluntary and trade union sectors have acknowledged that it has allowed them to actively participate in the implementation of our Equality Schemes.

6. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

(a) Transfer of Employment Monitoring Data Libraries NI

Employment data for library staff transferred with employees to the new authority 'Libraries NI' at the end of March 2009. Employment monitoring data is scheduled to

transfer to Libraries NI after the Education and Library Boards have completed their employment monitoring returns to the Equality Commission on staff employed at 1 January 2009. Libraries NI's first monitoring return to the Equality Commission is likely to be due for submission in May 2010. A paper prepared by the Boards/Staff Commission, in consultation with the legacy organisations and the Equality Commission, on the requirements of ESA and Libraries NI under Part VII of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 informed the process adopted.

Education and Skills Authority (ESA)

ESA, when established, will be the largest employer in Northern Ireland. The transfer of employment monitoring data for around 30,000 staff from 12 organisations will require careful planning to enable ESA to complete its annual monitoring return.

The paper, drafted by the Boards/Staff Commission, in consultation with the legacy organisations and the Equality Commission, on the requirements of ESA and Libraries NI under Part VII of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 was reviewed as a result of the change of date for the establishment of ESA. In Fair Employment terms the 1 January 2010 is a very significant date. It's the date upon which the employment monitoring return on the composition of the workforce is based. The Equality Commission is taking steps to ensure that ESA is specified as at 1 January 2010 to enable it to submit an annual monitoring return for its workforce on that date.

(b) Schools Data

The annual school census operated by the Department of Education gathers data on religion, gender, age, ethnicity and on pupils with special education needs including the type of disability or other need that such pupils may have. The current data is based on the classification of pupils in accordance with the "Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs". The Department of Education is currently working with schools, through the schools' census to obtain more information on children with disabilities within the system. Some schools are still experiencing difficulties with the definitions, despite further refinements. The Department's assessment is that the data currently available on children with disabilities remains unreliable. Further consideration is being given to how the quality of the data can be improved.

(c) Achievement of Traveller Pupils

The Department is carrying out an additional data gathering exercise in conjunction with Classroom 2000 in an attempt to gather some data on the achievements of Traveller pupils. The WELB is the lead Board for this five Board system. A form requesting information on key stage results for Traveller pupils in 2007/08 has been sent to those schools that had Travellers enrolled in October 2007. This information will be analysed along with attendance, type of accommodation and special educational needs to form baseline data that will be used by the DE's Taskforce on Traveller education. The Boards are also represented on the advisory 'Taskforce on Traveller Education' which has been established to advise the Minister on future proposals for the education of Traveller children in Northern Ireland.

(d) Geographical Information Systems (GIS)

GIS is a means of displaying youth service data on a geographical basis rather than presenting statistical summaries. The Boards provide the Youth Council with statistical data related to various characteristics of both voluntary registered and

controlled youth groups. The analysed data is compiled into tailored reports which provide statistical and mapped information on:-

- types of youth provision;
- profile of youth service membership; and
- distribution of provision.

The Youth Service data is integrated with demographic data and analysed by age group and geographical area. This data has proved extremely beneficial in addressing statistical and geographical queries re New TSN, Section 75 – EQIAs etc. A series of tailored reports are produced for each of the Boards and the Department of Education.

In the previous year, proposals were drawn up based on a consultation exercise with main stakeholders in the sector to determine statistical requirements for a management information system for the Youth Service. In short the proposals were to collect data using a web-based approach to collect data commensurate with size and level of funding and to harmonise management information systems across the sector. These proposals have been put to the GIS Working Group and remain under consideration.

As the task of this group was to recommend a framework for a new system to ESA, rather than create the new system pre-ESA, the current system of data management processes, collation and dissemination will continue for the 2009 data cycle. As part of this on-going process of refinement, YCNI is currently undertaking an exercise to elicit good practice in the collection, collation and dissemination of management information through a series of case studies.

In addition to the statistical and geographic queries undertaken, a series of area profiles, catchment creation exercises and community audits using socio-economic and demographic data combined with Youth Service data, have been performed to assist the Education and Training Inspectorate in individual and area inspections.

7. INFORMATION PROVISION AND ACCESS TO SERVICES

(a) Access to Services

The Education and Library Boards, working with the Department of Education, established an Ethnic Minority Achievement Service. In recent years the Unit has developed into a regional Inclusion and Diversity Service (IDS) to bring together the support services for newcomer pupils¹. The IDS has facilitated the spread of good practice and strengthened the range of assistance available to newcomer pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL). Diversity Coordinators were recruited by the IDS in January 2008 and since then have been posted in cluster groups of schools to give support and advice to teaching staff. In June 2007, the IDS also launched a multi-lingual website to help newcomer pupils and their parents. The website, which is available in English, Irish and the top 15 languages spoken in this

¹Newcomer pupils refer to a child or young person who has enrolled in a school but who does not have satisfactory language skills to participate fully in the school curriculum and does not have a language in common with the teacher.

jurisdiction, has initially concentrated on explaining the education sector and assisting home/school communication.

The IDS is responsible for a variety of work areas from providing school-based support for initial parent/teacher meetings to follow-up advice on pastoral needs, basic language needs and curriculum support. In addition to this, it provides regional support for new teachers and Boards of Governors and is raising intercultural awareness. The key services of the IDS that are currently available are:

- diversity co-coordinators;
- interpreting and translating services;
- multi-lingual website;
- toolkit for diversity in the primary school; and
- continuous professional development

Departmental funding to schools via the Common Funding Formula and allocations to special schools affords flexibility to schools in determining the best way of teaching the language of instruction to newcomer pupils enabling them to access the curriculum.

(b) Information Provision

As a result of outreach work with Disability Groups the number of people with disabilities participating in, for example, the Joint Consultative Forum has increased substantially. Requests for information in alternative formats e.g., Braille, sign translation, have been met together with other specific needs. Signer/Interpreter services have also been provided to deaf parents of children in schools to facilitate parental involvement in transfer arrangements, teacher/parent interviews and parental contact with staff from Educational Psychology Service, SEN and Education Welfare. A menu of provisions is in place to facilitate access to services. They include:

- Information provided on computer disc;
- Information provided in Braille;
- Information can be provided on audio cassette. An inter-Board/Staff Commission agreement exists with Armagh Talking Newspapers for the provision of a reader service;
- A textphone has been put in place to facilitate contact with members of the public with regard to all the functions of the Board.
- The website being updated on an on-going basis. This has helped to ensure that it is in compliance with good access standards for people with disabilities. It currently meets industry standards for accessibility. Other accessibility features include skip links, speech enabled sections, variable text size, access keys and text only.
- The new multi lingual website available through the inter-Board Inclusion and Diversity Service, (paragraph 7(a) refers).
- Equality pages for the website have been created and are regularly updated. These cover equality of opportunity, Board policies and access to services such as Traveller Education Support information.
- SELB continues to use Browse Aloud software on the website to improve accessibility for site users with additional communication needs.

(b) Translation and Interpreting:

Board services spent £14,429.19 in the preceding year on direct services which complemented the work undertaken by the Inclusion & Diversity Service or directly by schools.

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Language	Translation	Interpretation
Polish	£2,700.47	£1,699.99
Portuguese	1,377.02	887.49
Lithuanian	1,616.79	1,009.86
Latvian	151.50	658.53
Slovak	922.48	0.00
Romanian	0.00	100.30
Russian	0.00	97.16
Ukrainian	0.00	80.16
Mandarin	1,260.61	0.00
Cantonese	149.53	789.75
Chinese	927.55	0.00
TOTAL	9,105.95	5,323.24

(c) Disability Access

The Board spent £416,780 during the 2008/2009 year on disability access programmes for Board premises including youth centres, libraries, board buildings and schools including:

- Craigavon Senior High School – New Lift, store and Disabled Access - £158,780
- Killicomaine Junior High School – DDA Works - £158,000
- Minor Works @ £20k each:**
 - Edenderry Primary School
 - Lisnadill Primary School
 - Markethill Primary School
 - Markethill High School
 - Donacloney Primary School
- Annalong Primary School – Disability Access scheme currently being progressed.

8. COMPLAINTS

There were no complaints received during the period of this report 2008/2009.

9. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The Boards/Commission have an agreed strategy in place to facilitate individuals and groups affected by existing or proposed policies to engage in the decision making process. Consultation events were organised on the new Disability Duties, equality impact assessments and the impact of the review of public administration. Two major events are highlighted below.

(a) New Disability Duties

In last year's report we advised that, arising out of a consultation meeting organised in

partnership with Disability Action and Mencap to discuss the Boards'/Staff Commission's programme of work in relation to the new Disability Duties a recommendation had emerged that information should be collected from children and young people with disabilities on their experience of the education system. This proposal has been taken forward by a small Working Group representative of the five Boards, CCMS and the Staff Commission (paragraph 11(b) refers). In November 2008 representatives of the Working Group met with the Children with Disabilities Strategic Alliance Network to update them on progress made in relation to the Disability Survey. In December 2008 a newsletter was also issued to Joint Consultative Forum members which provided information on the pilot exercise and the proposed way forward for rolling out the full Disability Survey across the primary and post primary sectors. A full report on the outworking of the Disability Survey is contained at paragraph 11(b).

(b) Joint Consultative Forum (JCF)

The Joint Consultative Forum, established by the Boards/Commission in partnership with NICEM, is an important lynchpin in ensuring effective engagement with the community, voluntary and trade union sectors. Indeed, it adds considerable value, due to the diversity of the group, to engagements and consultations. The primary item of business continued to be the implications of the Review of Public Administration on the education sector. For this reason during the year the Forum organised two major seminars on the Review of Public Administration 'Education'. These took place on 13 May 2008 and 12 February 2009 with around 60 representatives from the community, voluntary and trade union sectors attending each event. The main themes discussed were the Review of Public Administration, Inequalities in Education, and Mainstreaming Equality in the ESA and Schools. Reports on both seminars were compiled and circulated to Forum members, the Department of Education, the Equality Commission, the Human Rights Commission, the Children's Commission, the Community Relations Council and the Public Service Commission. The reports are available on the Staff Commission's website at www.staffcom.org.uk.

(c) Consultation on the EQIA – Implementation of the Job Evaluation Schemes

An inter-Board consultation event on the above EQIA was held on 21 July 2009 with NIPSA. A report of the meeting was circulated to all attendees. As a result of issues raised at the consultation event and responses received during the consultation process it was concluded that the EQIA should be reviewed (paragraph 3(b) refers).

(d) ESAIT Human Resources Forum

The Forum, which comprises representatives from all the legacy organisations, continued to meet on a monthly basis. During the year an extensive programme of work was undertaken. This included:

- the development of a RRVs strategy;
- making the case for the retention of the Boards' current voluntary severance arrangements;
- contributing to the development of the SDM for Human Resources;
- the identification of harmonisation/protection arrangements, terms and conditions sub group;
- review of vacancy control; and
- the Boards/CCMS and ESAIT developing a 'Draft Scheme for Recruitment and Selection of Teaching and Support Staff in Schools' for use by ESA.

This work informed the agenda for the Education Sector Joint Forum for Human Resources.

(e) Employment Equality

The Boards/Staff Commission have also contributed to the development of a Human Resources Strategy for the ESA and the Libraries NI. This work has involved:-

- the drafting of employment equality policies and procedures for consideration by ESAIT and NILAT, for new recruits to be employed by ESA and Libraries NI. The new policies included:
 - an Equal Opportunities Policy;
 - Work Life Balance Policies and an Application Form for flexible working arrangements;
 - Job Share and Career Break Schemes;
 - Flexible Working Hours Scheme; and
 - an Employment Monitoring Form.

The new policy proposals have been shared with management and the trade unions. It is intended that the information will assist with the development of terms and conditions of service for new staff to be employed as well as identifying harmonisation and protection issues for existing staff.

- the redrafting of the paper developed to *‘examine the requirement of Part VII of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998, as amended with regard to employment monitoring and Article 55 reviews and the issues to be considered in the establishment of both ESA and Libraries NI to enable them to fulfil these legal obligations’*.

This paper and its outworking required further review as a result of the change of date for the establishment of ESA.

(f) ESAIT Section 75 Equality Duties Group

During the year, ESAIT established an Equality Duties Group to consider how equality could be mainstreamed into its project work and to assist in the development of an equality strategy for ESA. The Group has provided advice and guidance on:-

- the ESAIT Equality Screening Process;
- an Equality Template which aims to ensure that equality considerations are built into the process of developing service delivery plans;
- the Equality Commission’s Effectiveness Review of Section 75 and its implications for the drafting of an Equality Scheme for ESA.

At the year’s end work had commenced on the development of an Equality Scheme and Equality and Disability Action Plan for use in ESA.

(g) Location Strategy

A location audit, identifying the non-school accommodation that will transfer to ESA, has been completed. This will inform the development of the long-term ESA location strategy, taking account of the regional and local functions set out in the future Service Delivery Models. The location strategy will take into account the PSC Guiding Principles on location, the Bain recommendations on public sector jobs

subject to agreement by the Executive, and the DFP Framework document which requires an equality impact assessment on such a strategy. The legacy organisations are currently compiling for ESAIT employment equality and other monitoring data to inform this strategy.

(h) Libraries NI

Transitional arrangements in the lead-up to the establishment of NILA (now known as Libraries NI) were put in place. These included the establishment of a Joint Forum to deal with the major changes associated with the outworking of the RPA particularly in relation to the development of a Staff Transfer Scheme, Recruitment, Redeployment and Voluntary Severance arrangements. In this context a major achievement has been an agreed Staff Transfer Scheme between the Management and Trade Unions (the first agreed scheme for an RPA affected group) for the transfer of library staff from the education and library boards to Libraries NI.

(i) Experiences of Children and Young People with Disabilities of the Education System

In June 2007, a consultation event was organised in partnership with Disability Action and Mencap by the Staff Commission and the five Boards. The purpose of the event was to discuss the Staff Commission's/Boards' programme of work arising from the new Disability duties. A recommendation which emerged from this event was that information should be collected from children and young people with disabilities on their experience of the education system. This was considered and it was agreed to move this proposal forward on a partnership basis with the five Boards, CCMS and the Staff Commission.

The aim and objectives of the survey are set out below:-

Aim of the Research:

To gather information from children and young people with disabilities on their experience of the education system.

Objectives:

- to collect information from children and young people with disabilities on their experience of the education system;
- to identify good practice from their experiences within the school system;
- to identify difficulties and challenges children and young people with disabilities may have faced;
- to utilise the information collected to inform policy development.

It was agreed that structured questionnaires would be used to collect information. These would be distributed through the school system. Given the age range and different experiences at the various levels of education, three questionnaires were devised. They targeted:-

- i) pupils at primary level;
- ii) pupils at key stage 3;
- iii) pupils at key stage 4

In addition an information pack was compiled. It included:-

- a) briefing paper explaining the rationale for the survey and the approach being

- adopted;
- b) standard letters seeking parental consent;
 - c) copies of the questionnaires and covering letters for post primary pupils only;
 - d) advice for the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) or nominated person in the school.

Copies of the questionnaires and information pack are obtainable on request from the Staff Commission.

Pilot Exercise

A small number of primary and post primary schools in the controlled and maintained sectors and a special school, in the Belfast, North Eastern and Southern Boards, were invited to participate in the pilot exercise which involved:-

- a) obtaining parental consent for children with a statement of special educational needs to participate in the pilot exercise in the school concerned;
- b) the issue of the questionnaire to the child/children in the school with a statement of special educational needs;
- c) the offer of assistance to the child/children completing the questionnaire;
- d) completion by the school of the final section of the questionnaire; and
- e) the return of all completed questionnaires to the designated Board/CCMS Officer.

The pilot exercise, namely completion of the questionnaires at school level, was conducted during June 2008 and although it was a very busy time of year, 81 responses were received which was a return rate of approximately 80%. These responses were analysed and a Data Overview document was compiled, (Appendix 3 refers). Arising from the analysis and the feedback received from the schools, amendments were made to each of the three questionnaires. A number of general suggestions were made by schools including the proposal that the survey be made available 'on-line' for pupils to complete and that the survey be conducted at suggested times during the school year. The special school that participated in the pilot had some concerns about the approach for their pupils and suggested that other mechanisms should be explored to collect information on the experiences of children and young people within special schools.

Full Survey

The feedback received informed the way forward in terms of the full survey. Namely, it was agreed that, in regard to pupils in special schools, a different approach would be explored in consultation with the Disability Groups and Special Schools and that representations be made to C2K regarding the survey being made available on-line. C2K undertook to have the primary school survey available online by December 2008 and the post primary by February 2009. The Department of Education provided a representative sample of schools targeting approximately 1,000 pupils. The sample was broken down by:-

- Education and Library Board;
- School type – primary/post primary;
- Controlled and maintained schools; and
- Urban and rural schools.

The success of the pilot in terms of the high level of responses was attributed to the

personal contact made with schools. This approach was maintained in the full survey with initial contact being made with 166 primary and 49 post primary schools and on-going advice, guidance and support being provided to 142 primary and 32 post primary schools who agreed to participate in the survey. At the year's end the survey for the primary school sector which commenced in December 2008 closed on 31 March 2009. The survey for the post primary sector which started in February 2009 was due to close on 15 May 2009. At the time of writing this report over 900 completed questionnaires had been received. It is anticipated that a report of the findings will be published by the end of November 2009.

At the Joint Consultative Forum meeting, February 2009, the Staff Commission, Boards and CCMS were commended for their work on this project and asked to explore the possibility of extending the remit to cover all groups of children/young people in the education system.

(j) Equality Commission's Advisory Groups

- **Section 75 Standard of Compliance Project**

During 2008, the Equality Commission established the above Advisory Group to assist it by way of review, quality assurance and advice, in the development of an audit based approach which will enable effective, objective and consistent monitoring, assessment and enforcement of public authority compliance with the Section 75 statutory equality duties.

- **Section 75 Revised Guide**

During 2009, a second group was established to provide an opportunity to discuss substantive thematic policy areas arising from the consultation exercise on the above revised Guide and to develop policy options for consideration by the Equality Commission on key aspects of the Section 75 equality duties. The Advisory Groups are representative of the Community, Voluntary, Trade Union and Public Sectors. The Equality Co-ordinator for the Boards/Staff Commission is a member of both these Advisory Groups. Work is at an advanced stage in the development of a two tier standard of compliance. In terms of the revised guide, substantial progress has been made on a number of the key policy areas and a paper is being submitted to the May 2009 meeting of the Equality Commission with a number of proposals/options for consideration.

10. THE GOOD RELATIONS DUTY

The Boards'/Staff Commission's Good Relations Strategy is cited by the Equality Commission as an example of good practice in its Good Relations Guide. Progress on a number of initiatives is detailed below:-

(a) Promoting a Good and Harmonious Working Environment

The Commission's Equality Co-ordinator represented the Boards/Staff Commission at a roundtable event organised by the Equality Commission to discuss its guidance for employers on 'Promoting a Good and Harmonious Working Environment'. The Equality Co-ordinator also contributed to the revised guidance published by the Equality Commission in December 2008.

(b) Joint Declaration of Protection

During the year a Joint Declaration of Protection (JDP) was developed by the Teachers' Negotiating Council. The JDP recognises the moral and statutory

responsibilities placed on Employers and Trade Unions by the Equality Pay Act (NI) 1970 (as amended); Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended); Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended); Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (as amended); Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 (as amended); Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2003, Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 and Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The JDP was formally agreed by the Teachers' Negotiating Council on the 6 April 2009 and arrangements are being made for it to be issued to schools and placed on the Board's website.

Work is ongoing to update the Boards' Joint Declaration of Protection originally developed under the auspices of the Joint Negotiating Council for non-teaching staff. The revised declaration will take account of the recently published revised guidance for employers on the promotion of a good and harmonious working environment, paragraph 10 (a) refers.

(c) Traveller Education

Following a request from the Department of Education the Association of Chief Executives agreed to establish a regional model for service delivery within Traveller Education. An inter-board working group completed a proposal which outlines the structure, management and delivery of a new regional service for Traveller Education and this has been approved by the five Boards and submitted to the Department for their consideration. Discussions between SELB as the lead Board, the Department of Education and the Education and Skills Authority have been completed with a view to starting up the new service shortly. The Boards are also represented on the advisory 'Task Force on Traveller Education' which has been established to advise the Minister on future proposals for the education of Traveller children in Northern Ireland. The Task Force has been asked to review the current position within education and make recommendations for future plans including a final report to the Minister by mid-2010.

A north/south Conference on Best Practice in Traveller Education took place on 11 March 2009. It was aimed primarily at educationalists with participation from relevant non Government organisations and raised awareness among principals and teachers of a range of good practice and encouraged associated changes in schools. The key themes of the conference were: engagement with Traveller parents and pupils; the inclusive school; participation in education; and pathways to work.

Presentations were provided under each theme. Information on the presentations provided on the Northern Ireland input to the conference is set out below:-

- **Toybox Project**

This project seeks to engage Traveller parents through Development Workers in the pre-school development of Traveller children by their first educators, the children's parents. It also encourages the involvement of children in Pre-School/Nursery provision and links to Primary schools.

- **St Mary's Primary School, Belfast**

The majority of the 127 children attending this school are from the Traveller Community. The school has an open and inclusive policy which welcomes all children equally and which recognises the uniqueness and value of each child. The school offers pupils access to a high quality learning environment which is tailored to the individual learning needs of each child.

- **Botanic Primary School, Belfast**

The school presents a truly multi-cultural environment with over 23 countries represented by enrolled pupils including 30 Roma children. The presentation covered the induction and support of new children, the pastoral issues presented and ways in which the school is developing inclusion measures.

- **Munia Beoir (Good Woman) and Traveller History Project (SELB)**

Munia Beoir was a Multi-media Art Exhibition developed by 6 young traveller women and explored ideas relating to culture, identity, the home, journeys and dreams. It won a Northern Ireland Youth Award for Inclusion in 2008. The Traveller History Project involved 18 young Travellers in a two day workshop which equipped participants with digital and other media skills which were then used to document and illustrate local family history.

- **'Transitions' in the BELB**

The 'Moving Up' programme provides a comprehensive package of open days, visits and contacts between teachers, pupils and parents to assist with the transfer from primary to secondary levels of education enhanced by support from the Education Welfare Service.

- **Travellers in Employment**

Two traveller women presented their experience of education and employment, one with Toybox and one in a nursing home to highlight the lack of understanding between Traveller and Settled communities and ways of reducing this.

- **YESIP Training Programme (St Patrick's College, Ballymena)**

Since 2003 a number of Traveller children have successfully participated in this programme of work placement aimed at encouraging successful transition from school to the world of work. The programme aims to enhance the interpersonal and communications skills of participants, provide experience of recruitment and selection as well as the work environment and routines.

The SELB Traveller Education Support Service continues to provide a range of in-school and out of school advice, support and guidance services to Traveller parents and children through a team which includes teachers, educationalists and a youth worker. The range of programme development work included:

- visiting schools to offer practical advice and guidance on Traveller support;
- further development of the Inclusion in Education project (Coalisland);
- liaising with parents, schools and Education Welfare Officers to promote the welfare of Traveller pupils;
- working on Transition programmes for Traveller children with key schools;
- encouraging schools to participate in the consultation process regarding the proposed policy on "The Education of Children and Young People From The Traveller Community".
- liaising with Area Learning Communities to ensure the measures recommended will be implemented successfully including through the "Entitlement Framework".
- working with local communities and other organisations to address the needs of road-side Travellers in Craigavon and Meigh;
- Working with youth services in Craigavon, Newry and Coalisland to maximise the involvement of older Traveller children in their local youth services.

(d) Newcomer Pupils

In the 2008/09 financial year the DE allocated a total of £6,545,000 to support newcomer pupils across the education sector. In October 2008, 6,995 newcomer pupils were recorded on the school census – over 3 times as many as in 2004 and a 23.5% growth on the previous year. Of this 6,995, 4,660 were in Primary Schools, 2,142 in Post Primary Schools, 160 in Nursery Schools and 33 in Special Schools.

Of this 2008 figure, 1,554 were located in SELB schools. There are over forty different languages spoken by these newcomer pupils. The top three in terms of numbers are Polish, Lithuanian and Portuguese. Support services to newcomer pupils are provided through the inter-Board Inclusion and Diversity Service (IDS), (paragraph 7(a) refers).

(e) Good Relations – Anti-Sectarianism/Anti-Racism Work

Several board services including the Youth Service and the Social Inclusion Unit work closely with the District Councils on the Good Relations Fora and the Peace 3 Partnerships. SELB remains the lead board for the management of the Youth Education Peace 3 Programme entitled “Young People Building Positive Relations” which has 10 delivery partners across all the main youth and formal education bodies in N.Ireland and the border counties.

11. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

(a) Review of Public Administration - Implementation Process

The Boards/Staff Commission are involved in a range of projects aimed at implementing the RPA proposals for the creation of a new Education and Skills Authority (ESA) and the new Libraries NI.

(b) Music Service Outreach



Young people with a disability:

- Music Tutors working in Special Schools – Rathore and Lisanally
- Access to GCSE music qualification at Rathore (Newry)
- 1.5% students receiving tuition have a disability
- Access to Summer School and Schools’ Day
- A young partially sighted student was star of the show at our inaugural Clarinet Day, which featured professional performances by members of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, London and the Ulster Orchestra. During a session on

- Two students from Lisanally and Rathore Schools were delighted to receive awards in the 'My Music' category at our 16th annual Prize Night in Craigavon Civic Centre in June 2009. The SELB's chief executive, Mr. Tony Murphy presented the awards.
- Pupils with disabilities from Rathore School, Lisanally School and Clounagh JHS were invited to perform at the Prize Night Recital. The performances were so impressive that these pupils were also invited to perform at the NIELB conference in Newcastle.

Young people from a minority ethnic background including Travellers:

- Summer School provides access for students who are not already registered with the Music Service. It caters for a wide range of backgrounds and cultural traditions.
- Access to World Drumming is inclusive, provides an opportunity to explore cultural diversity and, so far during this period, has operated in 19 schools involving approximately 800 young people.
- The annual Schools' Day concerts were given by 161 young musicians to an audience of their peers in the Craigavon area. Approximately 720 pupils and staff attended, drawn from local primary and post-primary schools.
- Participation in Gullion Tales Project: Years 8 and 9 groups in disadvantaged area given opportunities to attend rehearsals and perform a prestigious concert with South Ulster Youth Orchestra.

Social inclusion

- All requests from schools for instrumental tuition are now covered. We are teaching in 210 schools throughout the SELB area
- Approximately 10,000 pupils now benefit from access to Music Service activities.
- We operate in 94% of all post-primary schools and 65% of primary schools including 42% of primaries with an enrolment below 100
- Whole class/large group inclusive projects operate in 53 schools and involve over 2,000 pupils who would not otherwise benefit from this unique musical experience.
- 22% increase in numbers taught overall since the previous year
- Music Service tutors working in Special Schools
- Broader range of options, musical styles and genres: guitar, rock and pop, samba band, world drumming, jazz, Ulster Scots/Irish Traditional, music technology etc.
- The Music Service Road show - live music experiences using our full staff orchestra and samba band - presented concerts to over 1,680 pupils. These were largely targeted at schools in outlying areas of the SELB
- Parents were invited to attend Roadshow recitals and orchestra and band concerts
- Access to Summer School, theory and aural classes for non Music Service students
- Adult ensembles supported by the Music Service offer opportunities for a life-long experience of music making.

(c) Youth Service

The Youth Service delivers a range of inclusive youth work services to all groupings within Section 75 and has a dedicated Inclusion Unit which leads on a range of training, advice, support and development programmes. In the 2008/2009 year the Youth Services across the Southern board area delivered equality-based work through the following activities:

Training

Deaf Awareness and Communication Skills Course. This was delivered to nine part-time staff/volunteers from the SELB area. Participants gained an understanding of legislation and how to identify young people with a hearing loss and their communication needs. They were also equipped with practical tools to enable them to communicate clearly and recognise different communication methods.

Inclusive Games Training. This training course was designed in partnership with Disability Sports NI to provide participants with knowledge to run practical activity sessions in a range of inclusive games including bogging, goal ball, curling and zone hockey. This training was delivered to 18 part time staff, volunteers and senior members.

Peer Education in Promoting Good Relations NIOCN Level 1. This course was delivered to 11 young people from Newry City. The training provided participants with the under-pinning knowledge and skills for them to deliver Community Relations programmes as peer educators to other young people in their own area. The training also provided an opportunity for young people to contribute to building a shared and inclusive society in Northern Ireland. A series of evening workshops and a residential took place between October 2008 and March 2009.

Senior Member Training Course. This training was delivered in partnership with Enable NI to 10 senior members with learning disabilities from Engage Clubs in Portadown and Banbridge. It was designed to encourage the personal development of young people by helping them to understand their relationships with their peers, what is involved in decision making, become aware of own strengths and weaknesses and develop some of the skills involved in working with others.

LGBT Awareness and Skills Based Training. This two-day course was delivered to 13 full time staff. The course aimed to promote good relations by enabling staff to address issues on homophobia and develop a greater understanding of diversity in relation to sexual orientation. It also sought to inform staff of the issues pertinent to young LGBT people and gain skills which would better equip workers to provide effective support to young LGBT people.

Conferences and Workshops

Good Relations Conference 2008

This one day conference was attended by 35 full time staff and focused on a Good Relations Strategy for youth work, local and global citizenship in SELB Schools, violence in Northern Ireland; Its Legacy and the potential for work with young men and consultation on Department of Education Community Relations Policy.

Traveller Focus Week

Five full time staff attended a one day event in Newry organised by Traveller Support Groups to highlight the good work going on with travellers in the SELB area. An information session and workshop on specific themes e.g. myth busting, accommodation/nights was followed in the afternoon by a performance of "Feuding" by Michael Collins, actor and traveller. The SELB Youth Service provided an information stand highlighting practice in Newry and Craigavon.

Epilogues Training

Epilogues is a workshop based education programme that explores the underlying causes of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. It is innovative in its use of new media to engage people in the everyday work of peace-building. Three full time staff attended this jointly promoted by the SELB/WELB in partnership with Gaslight Productions. Youth workers from across the five ELB areas received their certificates in Equity, Diversity and Interdependence NIOCN Level 3 training at a ceremony in Belfast Castle.

Our Shared Future. This innovative project enabled young people to explore the concept of “Our Shared Future” from their perspective using various creative media. The young people looked at the needs of young people in a post conflict society, explored how the legacy of the past impacts on young people and captured young peoples vision of “Our Shared Future”. Participating projects came from Kilkeel, Newry, Crossmaglen, Dundalk, Banbridge and Cookstown.

Inclusion In The Outdoors. This Summer Scheme Programme aimed to introduce young people from less advantaged groups and communities in our society to outdoor education activities at Killowen Outdoor Education Centre. Forty six young people were recruited by our partner organisations Enable N.I., Cedar Foundation, Cookstown Disability Forum, Craigavon Travellers Support Committee, Newry Young Travellers, Newry Junior Gateway Club and Craigavon and Banbridge Young Carers. The young people highlighted in their evaluations the range of activities available at the centre and the activities they participated in despite the atrocious weather conditions.

Celebrating Diversity through Creativity. These workshops offered Summer Schemes the opportunity to participate in arts programmes. Four art forms were offered; music, visual arts, drama and dance. Twelve Summer Schemes involving 225 young people took part. Some of the diversity issues covered included; race, ethnicity and disability.

Inclusion In the Outdoors Summer Residential. This project aimed to introduce young people from less advantaged groups and communities in our society to outdoor education activities at Shannaghmore Education Centre. The programme provided accredited training in an outdoor education discipline (John Muir Award) encompassing canoeing, bouldering, climbing and environmental activities. Thirteen young people completed the award successfully.

Inclusion Summer Roadshow. Ten summer schemes participated in a peer education disability awareness programme utilising persona dolls and inclusive games. The project built capacity among young people, part-time staff and volunteers.

Your Past – Our Future. Forty young people across the SELB attended the inter-board “Your Past – Our Future” Community Relations event at Stormont. Two hundred young people attended the event and made it clear that sectarianism, fear, divided communities, paramilitaries, flags, slogans and peace walls are still very much part and parcel of living in N.Ireland.

(d) Educational Welfare Service

School Age Mothers

- Individual Education Plan to ensure continuity of education
- Individual and Groupwork programmes delivered and offered to all young mothers
- Childcare provision provided and funded

- Transport needs met
- Service promoted throughout the SELB area to ensure inclusion

Looked after children

- Participation in all Looked After Forums
- Key workers identified to work with all residential units
- Partnership requirements fulfilled
- Individual supports facilitated

Travellers and ethnic minorities

- Inclusive services provided through use of interpretation and translating services
- Cultural awareness training updated continuously to all staff
- Local partnerships developed and collaborated with to ensure effectiveness in delivery of services

Representation by various staff on many local and regional fora:

- Young carers
- Youth offending
- Domestic violence
- Parent support group
- Child protection Panels

(e) Curriculum

The revised curriculum aims to prepare young people better for life and work and provides teachers with greater flexibility to tailor their teaching to meet the needs of pupils and enable them to develop as confident and articulate individuals, able to play their full part in our society and economy. The revised curriculum has a new area of “Personal Development and Mutual Understanding” (PDMU) at primary then “Learning for Life and Work” (LLW). PDMU/LLW includes employability from primary school onwards to help young people develop an awareness of the world of work and the range of available employment opportunities. They will also develop the skills to engage in their own personal career planning, by investigating familiar and unfamiliar jobs and drawing information, advice and guidance to inform this.

The Partnership Management Board, set up to manage the implementation of the revised curriculum, is providing training and support materials for teachers, to support all aspects of the curriculum. This includes a specific resource on PDMU at primary (called Living Learning Together) and LLW at post primary (called “Insync”) and the training is based on the use of these materials.

(f) Citizenship

Citizenship education was piloted in post-primary schools from the 2002/03 school year, prior to it becoming compulsory. All young people will take Local and Global Citizenship as part of their post-primary education.

(g) Human Rights Education

The “Lift off Project” was launched in February 2008, having been jointly produced by Amnesty International, the Ulster Teachers Union and the Irish National Teachers Organisation, to provide human rights based teaching resources for both Northern

Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. "Lift off" was developed by teachers in classrooms, with the support of both the Department of Education and the Department of Education and Science in the Republic of Ireland. This all Ireland human rights initiative for primary schools uses materials based on the fundamental principles of human rights as outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The materials are used by schools in support of Rights Education in the revised curriculum and in other initiatives such as Rights Respecting Schools. A second phase rights manual from Amnesty International entitled 'Me You and Everyone' for year 6/7 pupils is also included in the support programme for the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding part of the revised curriculum. A Key Stage 4 resource for Human Rights education from Amnesty International is due for launch later in 2009.

The NIHRC's Human Rights Education Forum has not met for some time, however, a meeting has been planned for 1 July 2009 to consider the establishment of a Human Rights Education Network which would promote the entitlement to Human Rights Education and best practice in its provision.

(h) Bullying – School Sector

The Education and Library Boards have established an Inter-Board Group, which is developing a common approach to tackle bullying in schools. Each Board has a designated officer who works with schools to tackle bullying through assisting in the development of whole school policies and supporting individual pupils who have been victims of bullying.

Pupil Personal Development Services continue to represent the SELB on the Northern Ireland Anti-bullying Forum and have an active role in the preparation of resources for Anti-bullying Week and is represented on the Forum's Homophobic Task Group. The staff have been involved in an Inter-board project (funded by DE) to make available an anti-bullying CD Rom to all Primary and Special Schools.

Anti-bullying school-based training along with anti-bullying workshops have been provided to over eight hundred children and young people. Anti-bullying work with parents as part of the DELTA programme continued throughout the year with six sessions facilitated in the Post-Primary sector.

A one day course for teachers in relation to 'Raising Educational Outcomes for Looked After Children' was facilitated. The Education Focus Group (a Children's Services Planning Working Group) has reviewed and updated the LAC Educational Handbook and this along with a young person's guide will shortly be going to print.

The team continues to work with schools in the promotion of school councils and other pupil fora to ensure that the voice of all children in schools has an opportunity to be heard.

Pupil Personal Development Services continue to offer individual and group support for children and young people referred because of bullying concerns and other emotional health and wellbeing issues. Some of these children are from a Traveller background, some have disabilities and some are Looked After. The interventions enable children with specific needs to have direct support in school in relation to their particular challenges and concerns.

(i) Bullying – Youth Sector

Work undertaken in the Youth Service, in regard to tackling bullying, reinforces the work undertaken in schools. The Youth Service's anti-bullying policy is informed by the Education and Library Boards' anti-bullying strategy and any DE guidance and forms part of the child protection arrangements in place throughout the youth sector.

The Divisional Youth Offices organised Anti-bullying Policy and Practice Training for all Youth Officers and training materials were provided to each participant including:

- The Bully Game
- Racism Ruins Lives DVD

(j) Special Education

Autism Advisory and Intervention Service

- Autism Awareness for Children 'Puppet Show'. This was rolled out in three Primary schools to explain ASD to Primary age mainstream school children: Edenderry PS Portadown, Primate Dixon PS, Coalisland, Cookstown PS. (photographs available)
- ASD Support to Portuguese family, Cookstown
- ASD Support to Polish family, Lurgan
- Neighbourhood Renewal: ASD Information Sessions for parents (held in three community centres)
- CHIP Summer Scheme Training July 09 Banbridge District Council
- Oaklands Respite Centre: Training for staff September 2009-11-24
- Surestart Dungannon: (and surrounding playgroups) Training for staff September 2009

DISABILITY DUTIES

Summary Progress Report

Introduction

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the Act), as amended, public authorities, when carrying out their functions must have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.

These legal duties also require public authorities to prepare a disability action plan showing how they propose to fulfil the disability duties in relation to their functions. The five Boards and Staff Commission have been exempted by the Equality Commission from this particular requirement because of the changes to educational administration arising from the Review of Public Administration.

The Boards/Staff Commission have developed an Interim Action Plan which has allowed us to implement a programme of work in the lead up to the establishment of the Education and Skills Authority and the Northern Ireland Library Authority. This interim plan complements work already underway in relation to the implementation of our Equality Schemes and includes measures agreed with the Equality Commission when the exemptions were granted. A summary progress report outlining the steps taken to implement this programme of work is set out below.

Consultation

A consultation event organised in partnership with Disability Action/Mencap on the interim action plan was held on 12 June 2007. There was widespread support at the meeting for the approach adopted and the content of the plan. Regular updates on progress have been made available to consultees. At the Joint Consultative Forum the Education and Library Boards, CCMS and the Staff Commission were commended for their work on the disability survey.

During the year an information pack and questionnaires were developed. A pilot exercise was undertaken and at the year's end the full survey was at an advanced stage of implementation. The questionnaires and information pack being used to conduct the survey are available at www.staffcom.org.uk. (Paragraph 11(b) refers).

Arising from this consultation event, the Boards/Staff Commission undertook to consider conducting a survey to collect information from children and young people with disabilities on their experience of the education system. A research proposal was drafted and endorsed by the five Boards, CCMS and the Staff Commission. During the year an information pack and questionnaires were developed. The information is being piloted in schools in the Belfast, North Eastern and Southern Board areas.

The questionnaires and information pack being used to conduct the pilot survey are available at www.staffcom.org.uk. (Paragraph 11(b) refers).

Interim Action Plan

The key elements of the above plan and progress to date in its implementation are detailed below.

Action Measure 1

Review measures already taken and/or proposed to promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

Progress

Review has been conducted and the report is available at www.staffcom.org.uk.

Main conclusions:

- i) Screening pro forma to be amended to include specific questions on disability equality. Pro forma amended and issued May 2007.
- ii) Collect information from young people with disabilities on their experiences of the education system. Pilot exercise completed June 2008. The Survey is ongoing. It is anticipated that the findings will be published by the end of November 2009.
- iii) Explore how consultations with young people could be enhanced. To be undertaken as part of the development of an equality strategy for ESA.
- iv) Examine the scope for the involvement of people with disabilities in disability awareness training for front line staff. Some training has been undertaken including Education Welfare Officers updating their awareness of mental illness.
- v) Consult service users on public access provisions. To be undertaken as part of an equality strategy for ESA.

Action Measures 2 and 3

Identify the current public life positions, if any, under the remit of the Boards/Staff Commission.

If such positions exist:-

- i) *examine how appointments are made to such public life positions;*
- ii) *explore how disabled people could be encouraged to apply for such positions.*

Progress

Public Life Positions

The Boards/Staff Commission are non-departmental public bodies and therefore have a very limited involvement in public life appointments. The constitution of Boards and Boards of Governors in regard to public appointments is as follows:-

Boards:

The constitution of each Board is determined by article 3(4) of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 which provides that the 'Board shall be constituted in accordance with the provision set out in Part 1 of Schedule 2 ...'. Schedule 2 provides for 1) the Department of Education to determine the number of Board members, and 2) the constitution of the Board.

The Board members are constituted from a number of prescribed categories:

- i) Council nominees which make up approximately $\frac{2}{5}$ of the total members of the Board;
- ii) Transferor representative members of the Board;
- iii) Representatives of the Trustees of Maintained Schools;
- iv) Persons who represent the services for which the Board is responsible;
- v) Three teachers serving in grant aided schools in the Board's area; and
- vi) Three persons appearing to have an interest in the Public Library Service

The numbers which represent each of the above categories are again prescribed by the legislation. The Board itself has no control over the number of persons appointed to the Board or the categories from which representatives are drawn.

Boards of Governors

Membership of the Boards of Governors is determined by the nature of the school i.e. whether it is controlled or voluntary and whether it is a primary, secondary or grammar school. The composition of membership of the Board of Governors of controlled schools is set out in Article 10(3) of the 1986 Order. The number of members depends upon the size and type of school i.e. whether it is a controlled primary, secondary or grammar school. The Board of Governors of a controlled primary school will consist of 9, 16 or 24 voting members depending upon the size of the school. Normally where there are 9 voting members appointed to the Board of Governors, of those members:

- a. Four shall be nominated by the transferors and superseded managers of the school or schools;
- b. Two shall be elected by parents of pupils attending the school from amongst the parents of pupils attending the school;
- c. Two shall be appointed by the Area Education and Library Board responsible for the management of the school;
- d. One shall be elected by assistant teachers at the School from amongst assistant teachers employed at the school.

Where there are 16 or 24 voting members, members are appointed from the same categories but their numbers are varied as prescribed in Schedule 4. Historically, in relation to category C, the Boards have appointed Board members. The Boards have not as yet had sight of the draft legislation for the Education and Skills Authority and therefore are unable to indicate the arrangements proposed for the management of Board of Governors post 1 April 2009.

In summary, the position is that the Boards have no power to appoint members to their own Board and their powers in respect of Boards of Governors are very limited. The Boards/Staff Commission have concluded that it is inappropriate to develop a good practice guide for consideration by ESA as such guidance already exists under the auspices of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Advisory Panels

Joint Consultative Forum

The Boards/Staff Commission established the above Forum in partnership with NICEM. Its primary purpose is to provide a formal working link between public authorities in the education sector and the community, voluntary and trade union sectors and the statutory equality authorities on the implementation of our Equality Schemes. Membership of this

Forum is open to all those individuals/groups listed on the Boards'/Staff Commission's Equality Schemes.

Action - When conducting targeted consultation events in partnership with disability groups, inform consultees about the role and function of the Forum. It is anticipated that this will encourage them and their respective members to participate more fully in its work.

Outcome – This approach has resulted in a significant increase in the number of people with disabilities/specific needs participating in the Joint Consultative Forum.

Youth Service Liaison Forum

This is a liaison forum with no executive powers. Its role is to share information across the youth service and debate issues and help inform DE policy. It is chaired by DE with the secretariat being provided by the Youth Council for Northern Ireland. Its membership comprises the DE, Youth Council, five Education and Library Boards and the voluntary youth sector.

Summary

In relation to public life positions, the Boards/Staff Commission, because of their limited role in public appointments, have taken a wide interpretation of this term and have included groups over which they have influence or a direct relationship.

Action Measure 4

Conduct an examination of training and guidance on the promotion of equality for people with disabilities.

Progress

Addressed under measure 1:

Action Measure 5

Organise a joint seminar with Section 75 Groups to:-

- i) explore how public life positions could be made more accessible to and inclusive of people with disabilities;*
- ii) examine how to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and*
- iii) identify measures which could be considered for inclusion in the disability action plan for ESA.*

Participation

The officers of the Joint Consultative Forum recommended that, in addition to the new disability duties being considered at the JCF, a separate consultation event should be held with disability groups under the auspices of Disability Action and Mencap.

Consultations on how best to implement the disability duties therefore included:

- partnership event between Boards/Staff Commission, Disability Action and Mencap, June 2007 (notes available at www.staffcom.org.uk)
- written submissions from Mencap; Carers Northern Ireland; Employers' Forum on Disability; Disability Action; Lisburn Access Group
- agenda item at Joint Consultative Forum, October 2007 (notes available at www.staffcom.org.uk)

Summary of Feedback from Consultees

Awareness Raising

- need to raise awareness of disability issues through corporate activities and training;
- training strategy should target teaching and non-teaching (front-line) staff - materials should be designed with and delivered by people with disabilities;
- consider holding an 'involvement' day whereby people with disabilities and their carers can contribute to policy making and raise awareness of the issues affecting them.

Research

- conduct research to identify the distinct experiences and needs of people with a learning disability and the extent of their participation in the education sector;
- if surveying staff regarding disability issues, target all staff to obtain attitudes to disability as well as obtaining feedback on experiences of employment from staff with disabilities;
- collect information on the experience of children and young people of the education system;
- audit research already conducted into children with disabilities being bullied at school, assess findings, consider what further action is required including whether further research is necessary;
- examine the attitudes of teachers to pupils with disabilities; consider the extent to which diversity/inclusion is addressed as part of their initial and in-service training.

Employment

- conduct an examination of routes into employment, criteria and experience required for each post;
- consider the difficulties raised for people with disabilities and/or carers when recruitment is to a 'pool' of staff who may be allocated posts across Northern Ireland.

Equality of Access

- people with learning difficulties do not currently enjoy equal access to, or benefit from, public services - identify the barriers and how they can be overcome;
- ensure the availability of information in a meaningful and fully accessible manner;
- concerns raised about the need for easy to understand signage in buildings and that in new building design it was important to achieve the right balance between attractive buildings and easy access.

Consultation

- seek to effectively engage with people with disabilities of all ages and types of disability;
- need to develop an outreach strategy to reach some people with disabilities who may use separate disability specific facilities;
- need to involve carers in consultations, particularly those around the implementation of the disability duties;
- importance of a co-ordinated approach to consultation.

Conclusion

The Boards/Staff Commission, in their final report on the new Disability Duties, will:

- summarise progress made;
- identify conclusions reached; and
- provide a report on the pilot exercise aimed at collecting information from children and young people on their experience of the school system.

**Progress Report on the Implementation of Actions to be taken as a result of the
ELFNI Equality Impact Assessment**

ACTION	PROGRESS TO DATE
<p>1 Websites will be identified and signposted which provide reliable, accurate information relevant to the needs of consultees and other library users</p>	<p>Examples of work during the reporting period are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Online Library</i> (see Action 12 below) offers access to 15 online reference resources. Most are available, free of charge, to library users from home as well as in the library. • Training in <i>Online Library</i> is provided for library staff, school library staff, school teachers and members of the public. • Eisodos database (see Action 7) • The 5-Board Information Publishing and Website Group (IPaW) continues • Quality assurance validation system for websites continues to operate on a 5-Board basis
<p>2 Libraries will provide ICT taster sessions</p>	<p>Examples of work during the reporting period are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT taster sessions are now part of core activities. Sessions are called <i>Start Sessions (In NEELB)</i> and cover the three topics Computers, Internet and Email. Over 1100 sessions were delivered in 08/09 in NEELB • NEELB staff held 4 week long <i>Scaredy Cats</i> and <i>Email for Beginners</i> courses in Greenisland, Crumlin, Rathcoole, Glengormley, Antrim, Portstewart, Ballyclare, Ballymena and Portglenone libraries. • WELB offer four week courses in Beginners computers and Internet and 3 weeks on email. They have one off themed sessions available 9eg travel, credit crunch, family history themes) • Northern Bank's website, Moneyville (www.moneyville.co.uk) was showcased in November 2008 in Coleraine Library. Aimed at children aged 5-7 years. • ICT sessions were organised in the SEELB area covering: Internet for beginners, Family history on the web, Money on the web, EBay for beginners, Creative cards using IT, Digital photography, Social Networking, Downloading music and Blogging • 8 Apple Macs were introduced to Bangor Carnegie library and a programme of taster sessions was developed covering I mac and garageband software. Workshops on exploiting our online library reference resource "Online Library" was held in Bangor Carnegie. (Action 12)
<p>3 Disability awareness training will take place</p>	<p>LISC(NI) training courses (May & Oct08) attended by approx 50 frontline staff from all Boards</p> <p>The Learning Officer in WELB spoke at two seminars on</p>

ACTION	PROGRESS TO DATE
	<p>Sharing the Vision - How Libraries can reach out to people with disabilities and made staff aware of Accessibility Wizard and some other helpful ways of improving accessibility</p>
<p>4 Equality awareness training will be delivered to all staff</p>	<p>All Boards deliver equality awareness training.</p>
<p>5 Boards will deliver training to staff in the use of the adaptive technology which has been installed</p>	<p>Each of the Boards is taking training in the use of adaptive technology forward.</p>
<p>6 Research and consultation to assess the specific needs of local minority ethnic groups in each Board area will take place</p>	<p>Examples of work during the reporting period are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of foreign language stock for adults and children • Portrush – one member of staff attended conversational Polish class for 12 weeks. • Ballymoney Library & PSNI – welcome evening every Thursday with tea/coffee; • Ballymoney Library & Causeway Institute FHE – English classes every Thursday evening • Representatives of ethnic minorities are invited to participate in delivering diversity awareness training • Library stand at Welcome Fair for ethnic minority families in Coleraine Town Hall • Monthly “Drop in” in Coleraine Library • Strathfoyle had a cultural diversity morning – Polish and Chinese. They also welcome and support the local Polish community with regular events including English classes in conjunction with NW Community Development and this is used as an opportunity to identify changing needs of the community; • SEELB contribute to Cultural Diversity Group in North Down and Ards region. Wide range of fiction stock purchased covering minority languages. Currently producing booklists for Latvian and Polish clients
<p>7 Groups and individuals including minority ethnic groups will be asked to contribute to the identification and validation of websites</p>	<p>EISOSOS is a new resource which was added to Online Library early in 2009. The resource is aimed at migrant communities, giving information and advice about living in the UK and offers the data in a variety of languages. During the recommendation process, members of IPaW sought the advice of various minority ethnic groups and related organisations.</p>

ACTION	PROGRESS TO DATE
<p>8 Taster sessions and specific marketing will encourage older people to use ELFNI</p>	<p>Examples of work during the reporting period are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Help the Aged</i> courses held in a number of libraries in NEELB (Glengormley, Magherafelt, Carrickfergus, Larne, Coleraine) and in WELB. • Workers Educational Association (WEA) held digital photography class in Glengormley Library. • ICT sessions were held in 10 libraries in NEELB area and 5 libraries in WELB area as part of Silver Surfers' Day May 08 in partnership with Business in the Community. • There are ongoing one to one sessions for older clients and many are involved in the four week courses. • Senior Citizens clubs run by Larne and Rathcoole libraries have incorporated IT taster sessions at meetings • SEELB libraries participated in Silver Surfers Day 2008 with IT sessions in Colin Glen, Lisburn City, Dundonald, Holywood, Donaghadee, and Newcastle. Partnership with Help the Aged continued in 2008 in the following libraries: Lisburn City, Ballynahinch, Downpatrick and Killyleagh. Information age provided sessions in Portaferry library. Everybody online held classes for the over 50's in Lisburn City, Cregagh, Newcastle, Colin Glen and Bangor Carnegie. While the University of the 3rd age provided classes in Downpatrick and Colin Glen • SEELB staff continue to hold group sessions for the over 50's in many libraries.
<p>9 The service provider will carry out annual technology reviews which will include adaptive technology</p>	<p>A full technology refresh of all "people's network" computers was carried out in 2008. In the previous reporting period a number of measures were taken following a review of assistive technology e.g. the implementation of 142 large screen TFT monitors. No further reviews of assistive technology took place during this reporting period.</p>
<p>10 Discussion will take place with the Service Provider as to whether it is possible to adjust the software settings on PCs across a large network</p>	<p>All "people's network" computers were refreshed during the reporting period and this included the introduction of flat screen monitors on all public access terminals. The accessibility features delivered are via the Microsoft software provided.</p>
<p>11 Further research will be carried out into the needs of hospital patients</p>	<p>A Holywell Hospital survey on library standards and customer care was carried out in May 08.</p>

ACTION	PROGRESS TO DATE
<p>12 Access at home via ELFNI to fee-charging electronic information services to which libraries subscribe will be investigated.</p>	<p><i>Online Library</i> delivers information via newspaper archives, encyclopaedias, dictionaries including language dictionaries, Ability magazine (information on technology for disabled people), Ancestry Library Edition, 'Stories From the Web' for under 16s.</p> <p>These are free for the public.</p> <p>WELB included awareness sessions for these resources as part of Silver Surfers Day events.</p>

SCHOOLS AND DISABILITY SURVEY – PILOT DATA OVERVIEW

The pilot survey was conducted during June 2008 in a number of Primary, Secondary and Special Schools within the Southern, North Eastern and Belfast Education and Library Boards. 81 questionnaires were returned, with the breakdown as follows:

Table 1: Questionnaires returned – by Key Stage

KS1 and KS2	46
KS3	25
KS4	10

Table 2: Schools participating – by type and sector

School Type	School Management	No of Pupils
Primary	Cath Maintained	5
Primary	Cath Maintained	3
Secondary	Cath Maintained	9
Primary	Cath Maintained	11
Special	Controlled	10
Secondary	Cath Maintained	8
Primary	Controlled	13
Secondary	Controlled	4
Primary	Cath Maintained	5
Primary	Controlled	6
Secondary	Controlled	7

Preliminary analysis

The data were recorded on Excel and some preliminary frequency analysis carried out on the Primary school data as this was the largest group. The KS3 and KS4 groups were not large enough to provide any meaningful results.

Background questions

In general the pupils did not have any problems with these and the responses provide a fair range of data that could be used for cross comparisons with other data.

How pupils feel about school

The vast majority indicate that they are Very Happy or Quite Happy. These preliminary data show that proportionately fewer KS3 and KS4 pupils indicate this. While this may not be reliable due to the small numbers involved, it might be something to look out for in the main survey.

Break time at school

The majority of pupils indicate that they do join their classmates at break time. This question should be suitable for identifying sufficient numbers for cross comparison with data on bullying and out of school activities to see if any significant numbers of children are socially isolated.

Pupils who did not join their classmates did indicate reasons why.

After school clubs

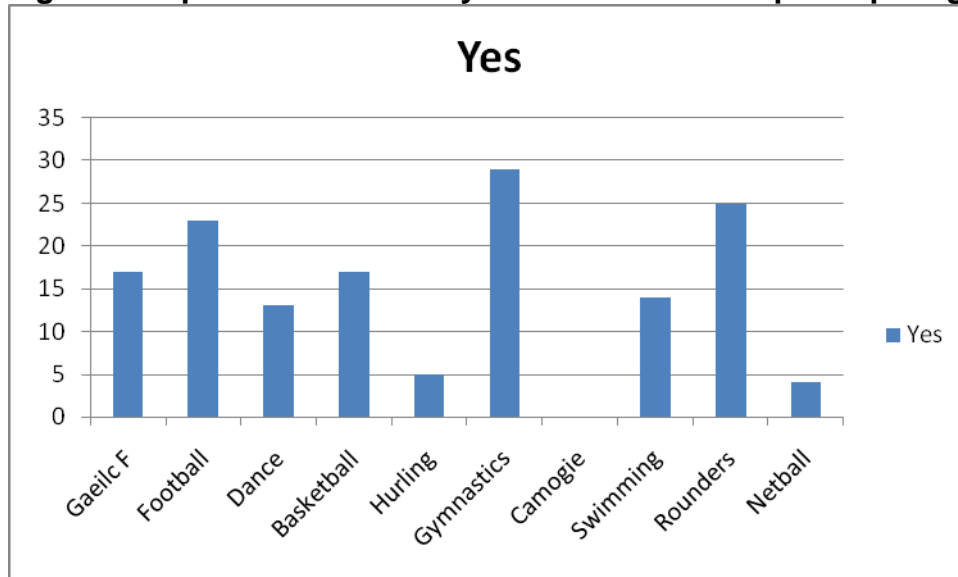
The pilot data indicate a fairly high participation rate among Primary school children in after school clubs and a good range of activities. Those who participated did give further information but these data may prove difficult to analyse in a full survey as the schools have different names for these clubs.

Data from KS3 and KS4 pupils indicated a much lower level of participation in after school clubs and activities but, again, this may not be reliable.

Participation in Sport / PE

All Primary school pupils indicated that they took part in PE and a frequency analysis is included in figure 3.

Figure 3: Sport / PE at Primary School – numbers participating



KS3 and KS4 data indicate a lower level of participation but, again, this may not be reliable. Those who did not participate did not clearly define the reasons and Question 14 may need to be refined for these groups.

Very few indicated sports / activities that they would like but don't get a chance to take part in.

Homework

All but one of the Primary school children indicated that they got homework. Three KS3 pupils recorded that they got no homework – all from a special unit. Some KS3 and KS4 pupils seemed to be confused over Q17 and 18 and these may need to be refined.

Disability

There is evidence from feedback from schools that some KS3 and KS4 pupils did not understand this question, particularly in special school. Responses from the pupils who did respond were variable. This may need to be reworded or left out altogether.

Bullying

29 of Primary school children indicated that they had experienced at least one form of this behaviour. Responses on the "why" question indicate varying levels of understanding ranging from "Don't know" to a very pragmatic "Maybe they are jealous or did it by accident".

9 PS pupils indicated that they had experienced more than two forms of bullying behaviour, and one recorded five types.

Responses from KS3 and KS4 pupils indicated variable levels of understanding.

Free-time activities

The pupils have attempted to respond to these questions but the range of responses is very variable and difficult to record. They will not be easy to analyse in a full survey. This question needs to be explored in more depth. The planning team might consider using the responses gained through the pilot as a checklist for choices.

Questionnaire Completion

The majority of Primary schools pupils (approx 74%) reported that they found the questionnaire easy to complete. All but three had some help to complete it, usually the class teacher or the classroom assistant.

Although numbers are small, proportionately fewer KS3 pupils recorded that they found the questionnaire easy to complete and fewer had assistance with completing it.

SEN Categories

Analysis of the Primary school questionnaires revealed that the most frequently recorded category was "Mild Learning Difficulties", often linked with Speech and Language difficulties. Approximately one third of the PS pupils were recorded in more than one category. The long list of categories makes recording of responses and analysis of this section problematic.

There is still a need for some mechanism for identifying children with disabilities who are not covered by the SEN process.

September 2008