

## **DE/2026-075 – Freedom of Information Request**

### **Request:**

I request the following information held by the Department of Education relating to expenditure connected to the “Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy” from 1 January 2023 to the present date.

Please provide:

1. The total amount spent by the Department in connection with the Strategy.
2. A breakdown of expenditure relating to:
  - school-based programmes,
  - safeguarding initiatives,
  - relationships and sexuality education initiatives,
  - awareness campaigns,
  - teacher or staff training,
  - consultancy services,
  - educational resources,
  - research projects,
  - and externally funded organisations or programmes.
3. Details of all grants, contracts, commissions, or funding arrangements connected to the Strategy, including:
  - recipient or provider names,
  - amounts awarded or paid,
  - purpose of funding,
  - dates awarded,
  - and duration.
4. Copies of:
  - expenditure reports,
  - budget reports,
  - evaluation reports,
  - procurement documentation,

- audits,
  - and impact assessments relating to Strategy expenditure.
5. Details of any educational materials, guidance documents, or training resources produced, commissioned, or distributed under the Strategy.
6. Copies of briefing papers, internal communications, meeting minutes, or correspondence discussing:
- allocation of funding,
  - implementation priorities,
  - educational policy implications,
  - programme effectiveness,
  - or concerns regarding value for money.
7. Any equality assessments, screening documents, or policy papers relating to expenditure decisions connected to the Strategy.
8. Any data, reports, or outcome measurements used to assess the effectiveness of programmes or expenditure connected to the Strategy.

**Department Response:**

Thank you for your request for information relating to expenditure connecting to the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. The request was received on Friday 24 April 2026.

Under Section 1(1)(a) of the act, I can confirm that the Department holds some of the information requested. Responses to each part of the request below are set out below:

***1. The total amount spent by the Department in connection with the Strategy***

***DE Response:***

Funding has been secured, in partnership with The Executive Office (TEO), for a member of staff to take forward the development of the EVAWG Action Plan and to coordinate interventions aimed at addressing this issue with children and young people. This funding is confirmed until 31 March 2027 and will represent a total investment of £70,000 (£35,000 per Department).

***2. A breakdown of expenditure relating to listed categories***

- a. school-based programmes*
- b. safeguarding initiatives*
- c. relationships and sexuality education initiatives*
- d. awareness campaigns*
- e. teacher or staff training*
- f. consultancy services*
- g. educational resources*
- h. research projects*
- i. externally funded organisations or programmes*

**DE Response:**

£70,000 was provided by TEO to support an awareness-raising and preventative filmmaking project exploring EVAWG issues, delivered through Cinemagic.

**3. Details of all grants, contracts, commissions, or funding arrangements connected to the Strategy**

- a. recipient or provider names
- b. amounts awarded or paid
- c. purpose of funding
- d. dates awarded
- e. duration

**DE Response:**

As outlined in response to Question 2, funding of £70,000 was provided by TEO to enable DE to support delivery of an awareness-raising and preventative filmmaking project addressing EVAWG issues, delivered through Cinemagic.

Further information relating to this funding is likely to be held by The Executive Office and can be requested from: [foi@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk](mailto:foi@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk).

**4. Copies of documentation relating to Strategy expenditure**

- a. expenditure reports
- b. budget reports
- c. evaluation reports
- d. procurement documentation
- e. audits
- f. impact assessments

**DE Response:**

The Department does not hold expenditure reports, evaluation reports, procurement documentation, audits or impact assessments relating to EVAWG Strategy expenditure.

**5. Details of any educational materials, guidance documents, or training resources produced, commissioned, or distributed under the Strategy**

**DE Response:**

The Department has not produced, commissioned or distributed any educational materials, guidance documents or training resources under the Strategy. Any future materials, including those associated with the Healthy Relationships Action Plan, will be published on the Department's website in due course.

**6. Copies of briefing papers, internal communications, meeting minutes, or correspondence discussing:**

3. **allocation of funding,**
4. **implementation priorities,**
5. **educational policy implications,**
6. **programme effectiveness,**

**7. or concerns regarding value for money.**

**DE Response:**

The Department holds information within the scope of your request. This comprises internal briefing papers, correspondence and advice relating to the development of policy and funding arrangements associated with EVAWG funding.

However, this information is exempt from disclosure under Section 35(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which applies to information relating to the formulation or development of government policy.

Why the exemption applies

The withheld information includes:

1. advice and recommendations to officials and Ministers;
2. assessments of policy options and funding approaches;
3. analysis of risks, implementation considerations and delivery issues; and
4. developing views on the design and operation of grant arrangements.

This material relates to the ongoing development of policy and funding arrangements and was created to support informed decision-making. The policy and associated funding arrangements remain under development and have not been finalised or made public.

*Public Interest Test*

As Section 35 is a qualified exemption, the Department has considered whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

*Factors in favour of disclosure*

The Department recognises that disclosure would promote:

5. openness and transparency in relation to the use of public funds;
6. greater public understanding of how funding decisions are developed;
7. accountability for the advice and analysis used to inform policy decisions; and
8. increased confidence in the Department's decision-making processes.

*Factors in favour of withholding the information*

The Department considers that there is a strong public interest in maintaining a private space in which officials and Ministers can:

9. discuss policy options openly and candidly;
10. test and challenge assumptions;
11. consider risks and alternative approaches; and
12. develop proposals before final decisions are reached.

Disclosure at this stage would be likely to inhibit the free and frank exchange of advice and views and would risk undermining the effectiveness of the policy-making process.

*Balance of the Public Interest*

The Department has carefully considered the competing public interests. While there is a clear public interest in transparency and accountability, the Department considers that the stronger public interest lies in protecting the integrity of the policy-making process.

Accordingly, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure. The information is therefore withheld under Section 35(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The Department does not hold any separate or additional material specifically addressing programme effectiveness or value for money beyond the policy development material described above.

***7. Any equality assessments, screening documents, or policy papers relating to expenditure decisions connected to the Strategy.***

**DE Response:**

Responsibility for equality considerations, including any screening or impact assessment under Section 75, rests with The Executive Office as the policy-owning department.

***8. Any data, reports, or outcome measurements used to assess the effectiveness of programmes or expenditure connected to the Strategy.***

**DE Response:**

The Cinemagic project will be subject to evaluation following completion and verification of project activity and expenditure.

In relation to other data, reports or outcome measurements connected to the EVAWG Strategy, this information may be held by TEO and can be requested from:

[foi@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk](mailto:foi@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk) .