

Supporting Newcomer Pupils – Public Consultation Paper

Executive summary

1. This consultation aims to collect your views on how the current Supporting Newcomer Pupils Policy (Newcomer Policy) supports Newcomer children and young people in our schools to thrive and fulfil their potential.
2. Over recent years there has been a significant increase in families from different countries coming to Northern Ireland (NI) and making their home here. This has enriched our society and enabled our school communities to become more diverse and multicultural.
3. The 2009 Newcomer Policy provided a framework to support schools enable our Newcomer pupils to overcome barriers and enable them to fully participate in the school curriculum. We have many examples of schools that do this really well, however, more can be achieved.
4. The current policy is a decade old so we want to review it to ensure it is effective and reflects current and future needs. To achieve this, we need your comments on how it can be improved.
5. We have already undertaken pre consultation work with Newcomer pupils and their parents, teachers and other key stakeholders including statutory and voluntary sectors. This included gathering evidence on funding arrangements and school support services available to Newcomer pupils and their parents.
6. This consultation paper contains more information about who we spoke to and what they said. It provides background information on the current policy and a summary of the information we have gathered to date through questionnaires, focus groups, and school visits.

Consultation - How to respond

7. We welcome your views on how we can best support Newcomer pupils and encourage you to respond to this consultation and to share your views on how we can improve the current policy. We are particularly interested in the views of current and former Newcomer pupils and all those involved in their education, including families, school principals, teachers, school support staff and community organisations.
8. The publication of this paper signals the start of a public consultation period that will continue until 15 October 2019. During that time we wish to gather the views of children and young people; parents and guardians; and all those stakeholders and service deliverers who are concerned with the wellbeing of our children and young people, particularly those who are Newcomers.
9. We would strongly encourage you to respond using the online questionnaire which can be accessed via the link below:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/D8DL83H>

Alternatively, responses can also be submitted in writing or by email to:

Address: Additional Educational Needs Team
Department of Education
Rathgael House
43 Balloo Road
Rathgill
Bangor
BT19 7PR

Email: NewcomerConsultation@education-ni.gov.uk

All responses must be received **by 5.00 pm on Tuesday 15 October 2019**.

10. When responding to this consultation, please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If responding on behalf of an organisation, please make it clear who the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were assembled.

11. Any queries about the consultation, or requests for alternative formats, should be directed to the postal address or email address above. You may also contact 028 9127 9921.

Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Confidentiality

12. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority, in this case the Department of Education. This includes access to information provided in response to a consultation exercise.
13. DE cannot automatically consider information supplied to it during consultation as confidential if that information is subsequently requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, if there is a Freedom of Information request for information submitted during this present consultation, the Department will consider carefully whether it should be made public, or treated confidentially.
14. If we are asked to disclose responses under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, we will take any requests for confidentiality into account. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
15. We will handle any personal data provided during the consultation in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulations.
16. For further information about confidentiality of responses, please contact the Information Commissioner's Office or visit their website at:

<https://ico.org.uk/about-the-ico/who-we-are/northern-ireland-office/>

After the Consultation

17. The views and comments received during this consultation process will be analysed and will inform the development of a revised Supporting Newcomer Pupils policy.