

**EVERY SCHOOL A GOOD SCHOOL**

**CONSULTATION ON DRAFT EDUCATION (SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLANS)  
REGULATIONS 2010**

**CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

<p><b>Name:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Organisation:</b> _____</p> <p><b>School Ref No:</b> _____ (if applicable)</p> <p><b>Contact Tel No:</b> _____</p>
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## **Further Information**

If you have a query related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact the Standards & Improvement Team in the following ways:

Email: [standardsandimprovementteam@deni.gov.uk](mailto:standardsandimprovementteam@deni.gov.uk)

Telephone: 028 9127 9415

Fax: 028 9127 9100

If you wish to respond to this consultation, please complete the following response document, or, alternatively download a copy from **[www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk)**. While email responses, forwarded to [standardsandimprovementteam@deni.gov.uk](mailto:standardsandimprovementteam@deni.gov.uk) would be preferable, written responses can also be sent to:

Standards & Improvement Team  
Department of Education  
Rathgael House  
Balloo Road  
Bangor  
Co Down  
BT19 7PR

Please note that all consultation responses must be received by 26<sup>th</sup> March 2010

## **Freedom of Information (FOI)**

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the public has a right of access to any information held by the Department, including information provided in response to a consultation. If you would prefer your response to be treated as confidential information, please write to us to clearly explain your reasons. We will take your request into account if we are asked to disclose information about responses but confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. We will, however, handle any personal information you give to us appropriately and in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

For further information about confidentiality of responses please contact the Information Commissioner on 028 9026 9380 or email [ni@ico.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ni@ico.gsi.gov.uk).

## **Consultation on draft Education (School Development Plans) Regulations 2010**

### **Introduction**

The Department of Education is consulting on revised regulations which set out the requirements for school development planning.

### **Background**

Article 13(3) of the 1998 Education Order places a duty on Boards of Governors, through the scheme of management, to prepare, and periodically revise, a school development plan. In doing so, Boards of Governors are required to consult the principal and consider any guidance provided by the Department, the Education & Library Boards, and, in the case of Catholic maintained schools, CCMS, and also any inspection findings.

Under Article 13(3), the Department previously made regulations setting out the matters to be included in a school development plan, the time period a plan should cover, the arrangements for publishing the plan and also for revising the plan. The school development plans regulations came into operation on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2005. The regulations aimed to bring consistency to the content of school development plans and to provide a framework for schools to monitor, evaluate and improve the nature their curricular and other provision and the standards achieved by their pupils.

### **Every School a Good School – a policy for school improvement**

The Department published Every School a Good School – A Policy for School Improvement on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2009. Self-evaluation leading to sustained self-improvement is at the core of the new school improvement policy. Schools should engage in a rigorous and reflective process, informed by the effective use of performance and other data, to identify those aspects of school life which are successful or excellent and those where improvement is required.

Self-evaluation should be an integral part of the school development planning process. The school's development plan should be the focal point of its strategies to bring about self-improvement. It should be a living document, which sets out the

school's priorities and brings together the key measures it is taking to raise standards, the planned outcomes and resources dedicated to achieving these. Of course, improvement is about more than just a written plan. As we implement the school improvement policy, we need to embed a culture of self-evaluation and self-improvement in every school and make sure schools have the support they need, from the Department and ESA, to plan for and bring about their own improvement.

### **Review of the School Development Planning Regulations**

The school improvement policy includes a commitment by the Department to review the requirements relating to school development planning and to update the supporting guidance material. In addition to Every School a Good School, the review of the regulations has taken account of the following evidence and policy developments:

#### **Evidence**

**The Chief Inspector's Report 2006-08**, which identified the need for more effective use of school development plans to improve learning and teaching and raising standards in primary schools.

The **ETI Evaluation of School Development Planning 2007-08**, which found that effective development planning makes a positive contribution to the motivation of staff, the quality of learning and teaching and the standards attained by learners. However, the ETI found variation among schools in their compliance with the regulations. The report identified the following areas for improvement in both primary and post-primary schools:

- a more proactive role for governors;
- improved monitoring and evaluation, by the principal, leadership team and staff;
- better consultation arrangements with pupils and parents;
- a stronger focus on teaching and learning outcomes and pupils' attainment;
- improved target-setting in literacy and numeracy; and
- areas for improvement to be prioritised over the three-year period of the plan.

The report also set out recommendations for schools, the Education & Library Boards/ESA and the Department and work is in progress to ensure these are addressed.

The recommendations contained in the Audit Office and PAC reports on the **Local Management of Schools**, including the importance of linking costed actions to improvement in educational outcomes through the SDP.

### **Policies**

- Every School a Good School: the Way Forward for Special Educational Needs and Inclusion’.
- ‘Every School a Good School – Supporting Newcomer Pupils’.
- The Taskforce on Traveller Education.
- The Pupil Health and Well-Being Programme.
- The review of the ICT strategy.
- The agreed Teacher Attendance Procedure, which sets out the onus on Governors to monitor and manage the attendance of teachers and to promote the health and well-being of their staff (TNC 2008/2).

In addition, the review takes account of the Department’s commitment, as part of the **Sustainable Development Strategy**<sup>1</sup> to incorporate the promotion of Sustainable Development in school development plans. Additional actions include the incorporation of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in the revised curriculum and promoting the use of the Education for Sustainable Development Good Practice Guidance<sup>2</sup>. The Strategy points out that it is important for our young people, the citizens of tomorrow, develop the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours needed to live more sustainably through their formal and informal education. Schools can also provide an exemplar of sustainable development in action, e.g. through the learning experiences they provide inside and outside of the classroom, their links with the community, health promoting schools, procurement

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/sustain-develop.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Guidance available via <http://www.neelb.org.uk/teachers/cass/environment-and-society/esd/> or [http://selbclounagh.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=258&Itemid=489](http://selbclounagh.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=258&Itemid=489)

procedures, building and environment, including waste management, energy efficiency etc.

### **Review of School Development Planning Guidance**

The Department will ensure that schools are supported in their development planning and will produce **revised guidance material** on self-evaluation and development planning in early 2010. The guidance will take account of the school improvement policy and also the amendments to the SDP regulations, e.g. providing advice as to how schools might include new aspects such as promoting Sustainable Development. It will aim to make the process more user-friendly and less burdensome for schools. Some schools use models such as Investors in People (IiP) and the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) to support their self-evaluation and development planning. The guidance will therefore provide flexibility for schools in their approach and the content and layout of their SDP.

### **The requirements for school development planning**

The Department has revised the regulations to take account of the issues outlined above. The overall aim is to promote effective development planning to bring about improvement in standards. We want to ensure that:

- the focus of school development planning is on raising standards;
- planning for improvement is supported by planning for the effective use of financial and other resources; and
- the process of self-evaluation and development planning is manageable and provides flexibility for schools to determine their own priorities.

The main provisions of the regulations remain mostly as before but some important changes have been made to the Schedule, which sets out the matters to be addressed in school development planning. These are highlighted below, in the questions for consultation and in the draft revised regulations.

### **What remains broadly the same?**

#### *Effective Date*

The body of the regulations sets out the requirements relating to the preparation of school development plans. The Regulations will apply to school development plans

being prepared or revised after 1<sup>st</sup> August 2010. Schools can continue to use plans prepared under the previous (2005) regulations, so will not have to make immediate changes as a result of these regulations. School should ensure they comply with the new (2010) regulations when they come to revise their SDPs.

#### *Time period covered by an SDP*

School Development Plans will continue to cover a three year period. Governors are still required to revise the school development plan after 3 years or, following a school inspection, no later than 6 months after the publication of the inspection report.

#### *Publication of SDPs*

The arrangements for publishing school development plans remain unchanged but will be amended once the Education Bill becomes law to require schools to provide a copy of their plan to the Education & Skills Authority (ESA), as it will subsume this function from the Education and Library Boards and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools.

#### *Schedule*

Schools are still required to address and evaluate their ethos. A school's ethos should be shared by all those involved with the school and permeate all aspects of school life, from curriculum to pastoral care. School leaders play an important role in forming the ethos of the school and evidence shows the importance of a strong ethos, a positive, caring culture and high expectations for pupil outcomes.

Schools are still required to assess the challenges and opportunities they face, such as changing demography or the introduction of the revised curriculum and, at post-primary, the Entitlement Framework to guarantee a broad, balanced and coherent curricular offer.

### **Where are the main changes?**

#### *Time period covered by an SDP*

It is proposed that governors will now also be required to monitor and review progress made against the plan each year and to update the plan as necessary.

## *Schedule*

The following changes have been made to the Schedule, which sets out the matters to be addressed in school development plans:

- There are additions to the strategies schools are required to have in place. Schools will now be required to put strategies in place for learning, teaching and raising standards, particularly in literacy (communication) and numeracy (using mathematics); to promote Sustainable Development in all areas of school life; to promote the health, well-being, attendance, good behaviour and discipline of pupils; to promote the attendance, health and well-being of staff; and to make more effective use of ICT.
- Schools will continue to assess the nature, quality and also effectiveness of their provision, with reference to performance and other data. The areas of provision schools are required to consider have been revised to reflect the priority areas set out in 'Every School a Good School – a policy for school improvement'.<sup>3</sup> It will be for schools, on the basis of self-evaluation and consultation with pupils, parents, staff and other relevant individuals or organisations, to determine their own priorities in each of the following areas:
  - **Provision to address the personal, emotional, social, educational or other individual needs of pupils.** This reflects the priority of child-centred provision and tackling barriers to learning. The issues that might be addressed include promoting pupil attendance, good behaviour and discipline; tackling bullying; supporting pupils with special educational needs or coping with other barriers to learning, such as socio-economic background, family circumstances or emotional problems; meeting the needs of newcomer, Traveller or Roma pupils; supporting the health and emotional well-being of pupils; and arrangements for pastoral care and child protection.
  - **Provision of high quality teaching and learning experiences and the resulting standards achieved by all pupils.** This might include curricular and extra-curricular provision, homework policy, teaching provision, the range

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.deni.gov.uk/esags\\_policy\\_for\\_school\\_improvement\\_-\\_final\\_version\\_05-05-2009.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/esags_policy_for_school_improvement_-_final_version_05-05-2009.pdf)

of educational experiences provided to meet the individual needs of pupils, and the progress made by pupils.

- **Arrangements and provision to promote the professional development, attendance, health and well-being of staff.** This reflects the ESAGS policy priorities of high quality teaching and learning and effective leadership. There should also be clear links to the school's arrangements for Performance Review and Staff Development (TNC 2007/02), the potential to provide Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) Time for teachers (TNC 2009/8), the agreed Teacher Attendance Procedure (TNC 2008/2) and the planned use of Baker Days and School Development Days (SDDs) (Circular 2008/02). This might also include any areas targeted for external support.
- **Links with the parents of pupils at the school and its local community, including the business community, other schools and voluntary and statutory agencies.** This reflects the policy priority set out in ESAGS, the revised literacy and numeracy strategy, the future provision of post-primary education and the Way Forward for Special Educational Needs and Inclusion. It might include, for example, collaborative arrangements with other schools to deliver the Entitlement Framework; collaborative arrangements to support pupils with additional educational needs; Extended and Full-Service Schools programmes; developing links through community use of school premises; business-education links; and links with bodies such as health and social services, the public library service and Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships.
- Governors will be required to show how they have taken account of the views expressed during their consultation with pupils, parents, staff and other relevant organisations in preparing the plan.
- Schools will be required to identify more clearly the financial, staff and other resources (e.g. accommodation, facilities, materials) to be used in support of their planned outcomes, targets and actions being taken to raise standards. This includes resources available to the school as a result of any collaborative arrangements it has with other providers.

Questions for consultation

1. Do you agree that the arrangements for publishing SDPs, to be amended to reflect the establishment of ESA when the Education Bill is approved by the Assembly, are suitable?

Yes  No  Not sure  No view

Comments

2. Boards of Governors are still required to revise the SDP after a 3 year period or, following a school inspection, no later than 6 months after the publication of the report. Do you agree that Boards of Governors should also be required to review progress made each year and update the SDP as necessary?

Yes  No  Not sure  No view

Comments

3. The Schedule to the Regulations sets out the matters to be addressed in school development planning.

Do you agree that the Schedule should continue to include the following matters?

i) Ethos of the school.

Yes  No  Not sure  No view

ii) The school's strategy for learning, teaching, assessment, and the raising of standards of attainment, in particular in communication (literacy), using mathematics (numeracy) and using ICT.

Yes  No  Not sure  No view

iii) School's strategy for promoting the health and well-being, attendance, good behaviour and discipline of pupils.

Yes  No  Not sure  No view

iv) An assessment of the challenges and opportunities facing the school.

Yes  No  Not sure  No view

v) Identification of the areas for development, to include:

- a) the school's key targets for the period of the plan, based on the Department's priorities for education, in order of priority;
- b) planned outcomes, including planned outcomes in learning, teaching and raising standards of attainment, which, in the case of schools other than nursery schools, must include targets for raising standards of attainment in communication and using mathematics;
- c) the actions to be taken to achieve the outcomes mentioned at (b) and final dates for completion;

d) the financial and other resources available to the school to be used in support of the actions identified at (c) to achieve the outcomes identified at (b); and

Yes  No  Not sure  No view

vi) The arrangements for the Board of Governors, in consultation with the principal, to monitor, review and evaluate progress made against the school development plan.

Yes  No  Not sure  No view

**Comments**

4. Do you agree that the Schedule should also include the following matters?

- The school's strategy for promoting sustainable development through the school's teaching and learning, leadership and management and engagement with its community.

Yes  No  Not sure  No view

- The school's strategy for managing attendance and promoting the health and well-being of staff.

Yes  No  Not sure  No view

- The school's strategy for enhancing learning and teaching, continuing professional development and school leadership and management through the effective use of Information & Communication Technologies (ICT).

Yes  No  Not sure  No view

- An assessment, including through the use of performance and other data, of:

a) the nature, quality and effectiveness of the school's:

- i) provision to address the educational, emotional, social, or other individual needs of pupils;
- ii) provision of high quality teaching and learning experiences and the resulting standards achieved by all pupils, including, in the case of schools other than nursery schools, standards of attainment in communication and using mathematics;
- iii) arrangements and provision to promote the professional development, attendance, health and well-being of staff;
- iv) links with the parents of pupils at the school and its local community, including the business community, other schools and voluntary and statutory bodies.

- b) The school's current financial position.
- c) The effectiveness of the school's use of its financial resources and the planned use of its projected resources in support of actions to bring about improvement in standards.
- d) The extent to which the school has met its key targets, or the progress that has been made towards these key targets in any school development plan which a school development plan supersedes or revises.

Yes  No  Not sure  No view

- The arrangements made by the Board of Governors to consult and take account of the views of pupils, parents, staff and other persons or bodies in the preparation of the plan.

Yes  No  Not sure  No view

Comments

5. Are there any other matters you consider should be dealt with by a school development plan?

**Comment**

**Equality Issues**

Following consideration of the impact of the proposed regulations in relation to Section 75 groups and the Human Rights Act it was decided that a full Equality Impact Assessment was not required. A copy of the Screening form is available on the Department of Education website at: [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk). If you have any comments regarding this decision, please provide them below: