



Education.....Living in unequal times





**The facts –
We live
in a world full of
broken-ness, one
which lacks
generosity**





- **All human beings are entitled to equal respect**
- **Equality of opportunity is an entitlement that derives from our inherent humanity**
- **Nobody is just an economic unit whose dignity, value or rights are determined or measured in terms of contributions to the economy**



- **Difference is a source of richness not the basis for unfair treatment**
- **Treating everybody as if we were all identical is neither the meaning nor the measure of equality**
- **The persistence of inequalities diminishes us all.**



- **Aspiration.** People should be treated with dignity and respect
- **Application.** This is mediated through them being treated fairly and equally



Education is important... Why?

- **Plays a key role in determining a person's life chances – social and economic mobility**



Education. The Challenge?





The General Trend





- **The educational standards have improved over the last ten years.**
- **Key Stage 2 Assessments in 2011/12 in Communication in English was 82.8% (target 83%);**
- **Key Stage 2 Mathematics was 83.7% (target 84%).**



- **Key Stage 3 slightly below the target for 2011/12 – in Communication in English, 79.4% (target 81%),**
- **Mathematics, 77.3% were at the expected level (80%).**

- **GCSE level (5+ GCSEs at A*-C including English and Mathematics), females 67.8%, (target of 65%); males was 56.3%, (target of 56%)**



- **50% pupils now leave school with 2+ A*-E grades at A Level or equivalent qualifications.**
- **The proportion of students leaving with no formal qualifications has been down from 27% in 1980 to 2% in 2012.**



- **Although Northern Ireland primary schools have scored remarkable successes in the past year, achieving the highest scores in the English-speaking world for reading and mathematics**

29% of adults in Northern Ireland have no educational qualifications



Key inequalities remaining

- **Concern re LGBT**
- **Social Class and selection**
- **Community Background**
- **Gender**
- **Travellers and New Communities**
- **Looked after children**
- **Disability/SEN**



LGBT

- **No protections for Transgendered pupils**
- **No statistics**
- **Religious Ethos of schools**
- **Homophobic bullying**
- **Curriculum - relationships**



Social Class and Selection





Social Class

- **Social background stronger impact on attainment than gender/religion**
- **FSM children 33.9% good GCSEs (66.7%)**
- **71.6% catholic girls achieved
18.6% Protestant boys achieved**
- **A levels was 66.2% against 13.4%**



- **76% school leavers in BT9 on to HE and 15% FE, 6% employment training**
- **19% BT13 (Shankill, Woodvale etc) on to HE and 39% employment training**
- **21% BT12 (Falls Sandy Row, Village) on to HE and 36% employment training**



Selective System

- **94% grammar good GCSEs: 39% other**
- **73% on to HE: 20% other**
- **3% grammar unemployed: 7.8% other**
- **51 schools with 30%+ FSM non grammar**



Community Background





Community Background

- **Protestants receiving FSM are much less likely to achieve A Levels or five GCSEs (23%) than Catholics (36%)**
- **Catholics were more likely to enter HE and less likely to enter FE than others**
- **In 2012 only 25 Prot boys FSM, non grammar went to HE**



- **Protestants were more likely than other groups to enter job training.**
- **7 of top 10 wards with lowest attainment are Protestant. All top 3 (Shankill, Crumlin, Woodvale)**
- **HE 51% Catholic girls, Prot Girls 45%, 32% Prot boys**



- **HE Catholics are over-represented in both undergraduate and postgraduate enrolments;**
- **Catholic students were most likely to enrol in **social studies or law**;**
- **Protestant students and students of Other religions were consistently most likely to enrol in **biological, veterinary, agricultural and physical sciences**.**



Gender





Gender

- **Some issues with stereo-typing (ELB)**
- **Home Econ: 97% fem Econ 35%: fem**
- **No SS difference males and females scores in Science and Maths**
- **20% UK/ROI degrees Engineering manufacturing and construction is female (**better**)**
- **13% STEM workforce UK and NI female**



- **Females generally perform better than their male counterparts,**
- **65.5% of female pupils achieved 5 or more GCSEs (including English and maths at grades) A*-C compared to 56.4% of males,**
- **Gap of 9.1 percentage points .**



- **Girls more likely to want to proceed to HE/FE. More qualified at Third Level**
- **57% total HE is female (**better**)**
- **90% Nursing female**
- **Higher tariff score (316) with 307 male**



Working class Protestant boys

- **DEL 'Audit of Inequalities and Action Plan 2011-2015' and ELB Audit of Inequalities**

- **persistently higher proportion of Protestant working class boys underachievement**

- **lower pre-school uptake and lower school attendance rates.**



Working Group Ed disadvantage :

- generations of working class Protestants viewed getting a trade as the main form of educational requirement,**
- The collapse in this labour market etc - Protestant working class stranded with redundant skills-sets and abilities.**
- Intergenerational problem regarding the undervaluing of education.**



- **Also loss of positive community role models, community instability, and the rise of organised criminal groups**
- **Special geography of urban Protestant communities- ‘pockets of deprivation’ surrounded by more affluent areas rather than concentrated areas of disadvantage, - a weaker community infrastructure than in Catholic districts.**



Travellers, Roma, New Communities





Travellers

- **Attendance and attainment levels of much lower than the rates for others**
- **Low level of pre-school uptake**
- **average rate of attendance at primary schools in 2007/08 - 72%;**
- **secondary schools in 2007/08 - 51.8%;**
- **high rate of dropout of Traveller pupils**
- **Lower levels of 'out of school' activities**



- **Higher percentage SEN In 2007-08, 42% of Traveller children had SEN Stages 1-4 compared with 14% of all pupils;**
- **52% had SEN Stages 1-5 compared to 18% of all pupils;**
- **11% of Traveller pupils held formal statements of need compared with 4% for the wider school**
- **Evidence of stereotyping and low expectations of Traveller pupils**



- **62%** left school with no GCSEs compared with **3%** of all school leavers.
- **Preschool**, though having risen significantly from 18.3% in 1998/99 to **63.9%** in 2004/05, is still comparatively low enrolment figure of **97.4%** for the general pre-school population.



- **11 school leavers over the six year period 2003/04 to 2009/10 achieving at least 5 A*-C GCSEs.**
- **In 2010/11 only 37 pupils were enrolled in Year 12 c.f. with 86 in Year 1**
- **average attendance of those 37 pupils was less than 51%.**



- In 2011/12 the level of unauthorised absence of Traveller children from primary schools was **17.0%** (nearly **13 times** greater than the general pop).
- Post-primary schools, unauthorised absence of statutory school age was **29.0%** (just over **11 times** greater than the post-primary average for all pupils).



Roma

- **Significant issues: little research**
- **Roma families - often very poor, have difficulty in accessing free school meals and free school transport.**
- **In addition, parents have poor literacy levels meaning- not always aware of the importance of sending children to school and the subsequent investment.**



Newcomer Children

- **3% (9,656)**
- **Small but growing 7 times in decade**
- **67% in primary and 26% post primary**
- **1.7% total post primary, 5.5% nursery**
- **59% Catholic, 29% Controlled, 7% Integ**
- **Bullying issues. Stereotyping**
- **Higher % of minority ethnic pupils leave school with no qualifications**



Looked after children





Young people leaving care

- **Equality legislation in Northern Ireland does not specifically extend to, or differentiate between, those who are in care and those who are not, 'The Care Matters' strategy, which aims to improve support for children in care, was endorsed by the Northern Ireland Executive in 2009.**

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- **At 30 September 2012, 1,878 children and young people had been looked after continuously for 12 months or longer. Of these children, 52% were males and 48% were females; 95% were White, and 14% had a disability.**



- **The Audit of Inequalities published by the ELBs for 2011-2015 reported that children in care are 10 times more likely than school leavers in general to leave school without gaining any qualifications at all.**



- **Department of Health -proportion of young people leaving care with no qualifications was 32% in 2012/13, compared with 2% of general school leavers in Northern Ireland**
- **proportion of care leavers obtaining 5+ GCSEs (grades A*-C) or higher was 18% in 2012/13 compared with 77% of general school leavers in N.I.**



- **Barnardos study of 66 young people who had been in care during their school years, 41 had been excluded for more than 60 days and 2 had no secondary education at all.**
- **By contrast, children who were not in care, 93% had never been excluded from school, and of those who had, 83% said it was for less than a week**



- **Peer pressure**
- **Behavioural issues**
- **Underlying social and personal issues**
- **Personal factors - as well as possible SEN,**
- **Contact with birth parents and age when a child enters the system**



Disability and SEN





- **June 2011, over 19% of the school population - almost 65,000 children – were on the SEN register with 4.2% of the school population (14,000) statemented.**
- **Of these, 93% (approximately 60,000 pupils with SEN) were in mainstream.**
- **More males SEN – social emotional behavioural KS3 70% KS 5 80% male**



- **Attainment has increased in the rates of pupils with any SEN or a disability achieving A Levels and 5+ good GCSEs**
- **But -are still approx 20 percentage points below the attainment rate for pupils who do not have a special educational need or a disability**



- **Students with a self-reported disability were most likely to enrol in social studies or law, least likely to enrol in medicine, dentistry, or medicine.**
- **By 2010/11, student leavers with disabilities were more likely to do voluntary/unpaid work and were unlikely to do further study**



- **Equality requires each of us to respect the rights of those who are different from ourselves.**
- **“Few will have the greatness to bend history itself; but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation”. *Robert F. Kennedy***
- **That remains our challenge.**