

## **Notes from the meeting of the Education Council held on Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017 at Hamilton House, Douglas**

Present: Ray Smith (Chair)  
Barbara Brereton  
Diane Brown (Secretary)  
Andrew Cole  
Jenny Pendree  
Robin Turton

Apologies for absence: Steven Bevan  
Margaret Mansfield  
Tracey Martin  
Louise Strickett

The Education Council believe that the items discussed at this meeting represent the main areas not currently covered by the Act, or where coverage is likely to be insufficient for the potential lifetime of the new Education Act. The Council strongly encourages the serious consideration of all these items and the specific suggestions arising from our discussions.

Items 1 to 9 had been previously circulated to all members. The remaining items were raised as additional items during the meeting.

### **1. Should parents be able to choose their child's provided school regardless of catchment area? *Section 15***

It was agreed that parents should normally select their local school. Catchment boundaries should be reviewed regularly, particularly in areas where there were, or likely to be, shifts in population. Parents should make application to the Department for their child to attend a school other than their local school. Judgment to be based on best use of resources in both schools.

### **2. Should the curriculum in Primary and Secondary Education be determined by the Department, particularly with reference to Religious (as against moral) education and the study of Manx? *Sections 8, 12 and 13***

(a) Religious Education: It was agreed that this should remain compulsory and broadly Christian. It was suggested that REAC be consulted for their opinions on delivery and content.

(b) Manx Language: It was suggested that this be broadened to the study of Manx Culture including Manx Gaelic.

### **3. Is there a role for the Education Council, including the importance of Governance? *Sections 4A, 5 and Schedule 3A.***

It was agreed that there would remain a role and need for such a group. Regulations would be required to clearly define the role and scope of such group. Such regulations should embrace all educational institutions including the UCM.

The Education Council would be happy to provide additional comments on this item and the corresponding Regulations. In relation to Section 4A(4), paragraph 3, "The Department shall by regulations make provision for the meetings and proceedings of the Council", it would be helpful if these regulations (or a link to these regulations) could be made available to assist further discussion.

**4. What should be the scope of inspection? *Section 50***

It was suggested that the Department should review the specified scope of inspection to specifically include:

- (a) all types of educational establishment (including home education); and
- (b) its own arrangements for inspection to assure high quality provision.

**5. What should be the scope of inclusion, provision of Special Schools and Referral Units? *Sections 18, 19 and 20***

Focus should remain on inclusive education but with flexibility to continue to allow individual and/or group support where required.

**6. Should the Department adopt the UK definitions for Further, Higher and Adult Education? *Sections 31, 32 and 33***

It was suggested that the UK definition should be adopted.

**7. Should the Department permit and monitor Independent Schools, Colleges and other training agencies? *Sections 32, 34 and 42***

It was suggested that the Department should have the right to permit and monitor the education and training of all children of compulsory school age.

It was also suggested that registration and monitoring should be required for all pre-school education, home education, independent schools and training agencies to ensure standards of education, welfare and wellbeing were being maintained.

**8. Should equality of opportunity be explicit other than in reference to religious opinion or to separate equality legislation? *Section 6***

Section 6, paragraph 4 and all other relevant sections needs to be reviewed to provide complete equality of opportunities for all employees and pupils within educational institutions, taking into consideration current Isle of Man legislation.

## **9. Welfare. Section 40**

This section needs updating.

It was suggested that the need to work with, and share information with other Government Departments to ensure the safeguarding of minors should be made explicit.

## **10. Protection of Employees and Pupils**

Whilst the existing wording should be adequate it was suggested that the Department consider strengthening this section to ensure incidents of bullying, intimidation and abuse via digital technology on school premises were covered.

## **11. Prison Education**

It was agreed that prison education, particularly where examination were involved, should be monitored by the Department to ensure standards were maintained.

## **12 Provision of Enrichment Services**

The Act should provide the scope for the Department to provide rich and diverse opportunities for the island community. Such opportunities to include Youth Centres, Music Centres, Libraries and support for the Arts.

The meeting ended at 12:10pm