



## 2022 CHAPTER 15

### *Statutory duty to support*

#### **Support etc. for integrated education**

4.—(1) In Article 64(1) of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 (Department’s duties in respect of integrated education) for “to encourage and facilitate” substitute “to encourage, facilitate and support”.

(2) In section 2 of the Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (functions of Education Authority) after subsection (3) (Authority’s duties in respect of shared education) insert—

“(3A) It is a duty of the Authority (so far as its powers extend) to encourage, facilitate and support integrated education.”.

#### **Meaning of support**

5.—(1) A reference in any provision of Northern Ireland legislation to support for integrated education (including support for the development of integrated education) is a reference to—

- (a) identifying, assessing, monitoring and aiming to meet the demand for the provision of integrated education within the context of area planning and the overall sustainability of the school estate (including, in particular, monitoring the number and success of applications for integrated education), and
- (b) providing sufficient places in integrated schools to aim to meet the demand for integrated education within the context of area planning and the overall sustainability of the school estate (including examining evidence of expected future demand).

(2) In subsection (1)(a) “monitor” means monitor by reference to data collected in respect of relevant catchment and other areas.

**Duties of Department and Authority relating to the development etc. of integrated education**

6.—(1) After Article 64(1) of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 (Department’s duty to encourage, facilitate and support the development of integrated education) insert—

“(1A) In considering what steps it should take for the purposes of its duty under subsection (1) to encourage, facilitate and support the development of integrated education, the Department must in particular take account of any representations made under section 3 of the Integrated Education Act (Northern Ireland) Act 2022 (consultation) which relate to that duty”

(2) The Education Authority must, for the purpose of assisting its strategic planning of the provision of education, take steps to ascertain the demand for integrated education.

(3) In this Act, a reference to ascertaining the demand for integrated education is a reference to ascertaining the extent to which parents would prefer their children to be educated at grant-maintained integrated or controlled integrated schools rather than at schools which are not grant-maintained integrated schools or controlled integrated schools.

(4) The Education Authority must take the steps mentioned in subsection (2) at such times as the Education Authority and the Department of Education agree to be appropriate, having regard to the purpose specified in that subsection.

(5) The duty in subsection (2) may be met by seeking the information required by that duty together with other information about parental preferences.

(6) In making decisions in connection with proposals about the provision of education, including in respect of its duty to encourage, facilitate and support integrated education, the Education Authority must have due regard to the response to its enquiries under subsection (2) (in addition to any other factors to which the Education Authority is required to have regard).