

Additional Comments

1. RQIA agree with the content of the aims.

2.1 details multiple aims and should be separated into three so that each outcome may be measured. Use of the word "create" does not suggest an empowering approach, reference to learning opportunities should be included in relation to, "develop the ability". In section 2.2 "promote" does not give a sufficiently strong message of intent and commitment.
- 3 RQIA agree with the range of principles, however the language used in some of them weakens the message, for example "innovation of creativity in developing policy will be valued and promoted", might be better. The use of "should be" is weak.
- 7 Generally the content and the intent are fine but statements need to be more measurable, for example "we will support parents by increasing the provision of parenting education programmes in". In the following action; "we will explore the development " why not state, "we will develop", also "support the establishment of" is not really an action. What will the DHSSPS actually do to establish parenting networks?
- 9 The actions identified are appropriate to a point. However, it is difficult to envisage how the existence of the Regional Database will "assist with timely referrals". Additionally there should be a commitment to providing free access to the database, possibly from libraries, so that parents and children do have ready access without needing a computer at home.
- 11 The action detailed appears appropriate, however, there is no mention of the education sector, schools, teachers etc in the assessment process and the first signs of a child's disturbance or unhappiness might well be identified there. The system needs to be genuinely multi-disciplinary whilst also guarding against unwarranted intrusion into family life.
- 15 The transfer of functions to the Department for Education requires very careful management and future policy direction. The enriched curriculum in primary schools and the focus on learning through play will demand significant retraining for those whose focus has been subject and curriculum based in a structured educational environment.