

PFG PRIORITIES:

EDUCATION

> Recommendations

We recommend actions to:

- ensure a move to a system of education which routinely teaches all pupils together via a shared curriculum in shared classes, and where sharing impacts meaningfully and substantively on every learner;
- tackle prejudice based bullying; address gender stereotyping in education; and remove the barriers facing looked after children and young carers;
- address education inequalities, including those experienced by Irish Travellers; those entitled to free school meals, particularly boys, notably Protestant boys; and children/young people with disabilities;
- mainstream equality in education, including in the curriculum, teacher training and the policies / practices of schools and wider education bodies.

> Educational inequalities

The Commission is of the view that every child should have access to a good quality school experience, can reach their full potential and that schools promote the inclusion and participation of all.

We consider that all children and young people must be valued equally and believe that they should be allowed the opportunity to develop to their full potential. The role of the education system should be to foster and facilitate that development.

Further, we consider that sharing in education, across the full range of equality grounds has the potential to improve educational access and attainment for pupils from a diverse range of backgrounds and abilities. We have also highlighted the need to mainstream equality in education, including in the curriculum, teacher training and the policies/practices of schools and wider education bodies.

We have also highlighted that bullying, including prejudice-based bullying, in schools is a persistent problem. We have raised concerns about the bullying of, for example, lesbian, gay, bisexual, minority ethnic, disabled, and trans pupils in schools. We have called for steps to be taken to tackle prejudice-based bullying in schools and improve monitoring and recording of these incidents.

Read more: www.equalityni.org/KeyInequalities-Education



PFG PRIORITIES:



We have also drawn attention to the non-attendance, drop-out rates and poor educational outcomes experienced by Irish Travellers.

We have recommended measures to address the educational underachievement of those entitled to free school meals, particularly boys, notably Protestant boys; looked after children and young people, young carers and children and young people with disabilities. In addition, we have highlighted the fact that fewer boys than girls progress to higher education.

Further, there is a need for steps to be taken to address the factors that inhibit girls' life experiences, such as gender stereotyping as regards subject choice, the curriculum and careers guidance.

"Many inequalities remain persistent and hard to tackle, and there are a number of new and emerging inequalities that are impacting on some of the equality groups."

[ECNI draft Statement on Key Inequalities in Education in Northern Ireland, 2015](#)

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