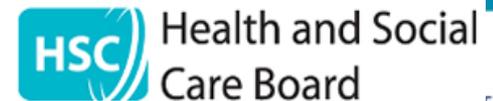


Elaine Lawson

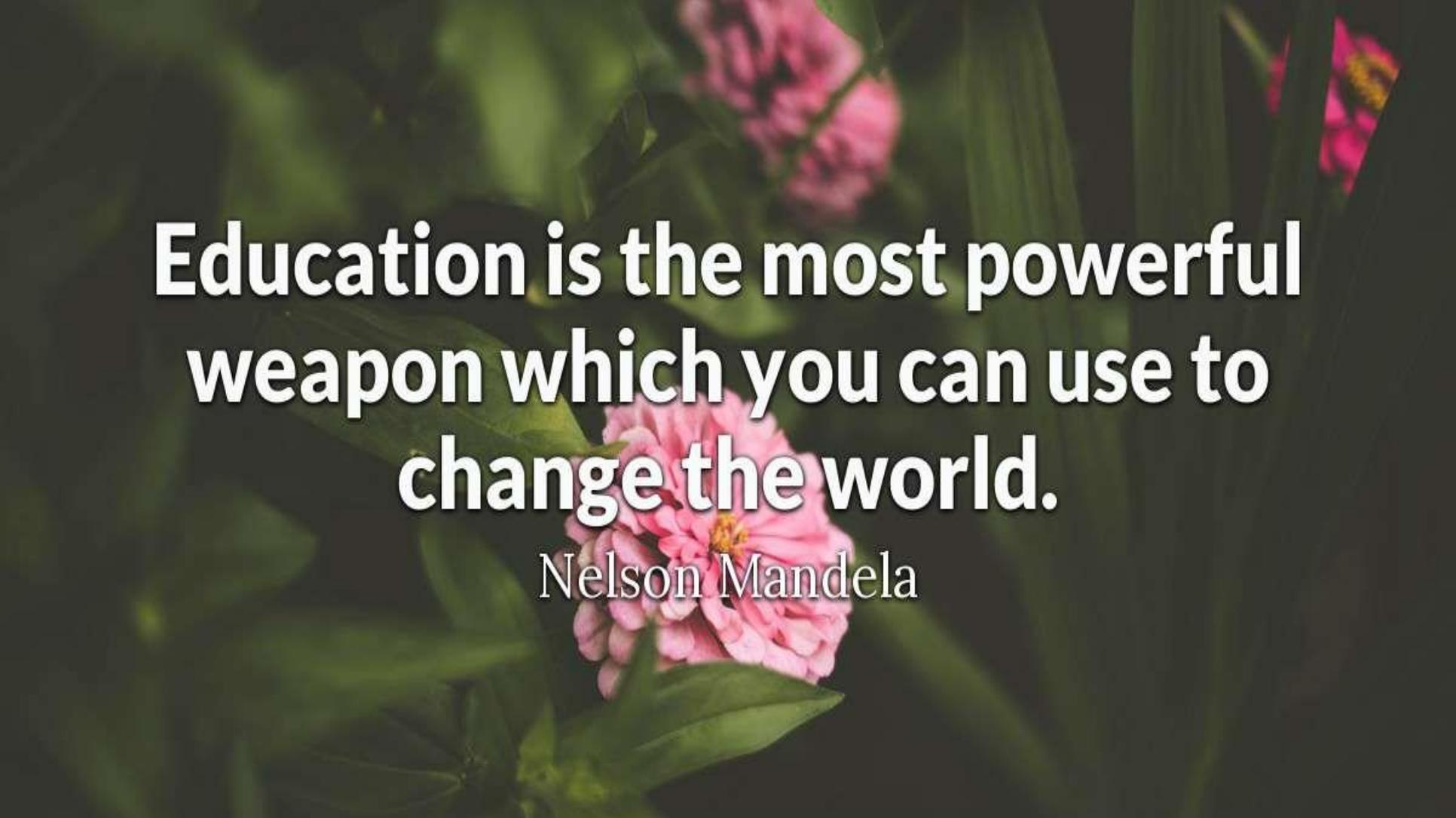
Department of Health



Looked after children: Educational Attainment and Achieving Economic Well-Being

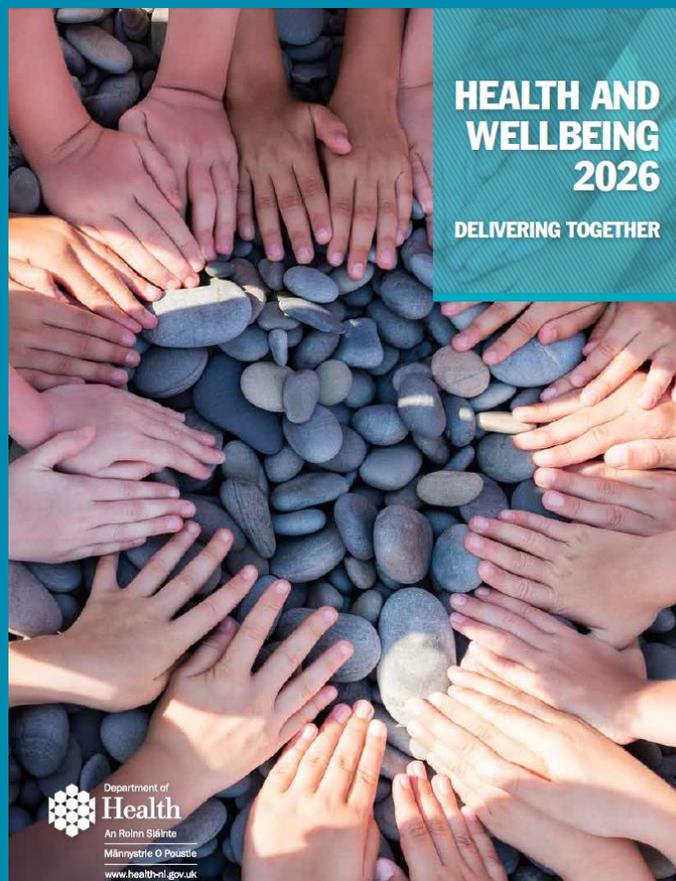
Multi-Agency Workshop

26/09/18

A close-up photograph of several pink flowers, likely zinnias, with green leaves, set against a dark, blurred background. The flowers are the central focus of the image.

**Education is the most powerful
weapon which you can use to
change the world.**

Nelson Mandela



“WE.....WILL BE AS AMBITIOUS FOR CHILDREN IN CARE AS WE ARE FOR OUR OWN CHILDREN”

Michelle O’Neill, MLA
Minister for Health
October 2016

A

8 Areas of Wellbeing



Draft Strategy for looked after children

- Consultation between May and August 2018
- [16] consultation events
- Over 200 people attended
- Additionally, around 100 children and young people contributed their views in a series of events and over 200 completed a survey
- 30 online responses
- 27 hard copy responses

OUR AIM

- *to improve the well-being of children in care and care experienced young people*
- *to deliver improved outcomes for them in important areas of their life such as their physical, mental and emotional well being, educational attainment and economic well being.*
- *to focus on supporting and equipping those providing care – such as birth parents, foster parents and residential care staff - with the necessary skills to give these children and young people the best start in life.*
- *to have fewer children and young people needing to become looked after through prevention and early intervention approaches and for those leaving care, to provide effective supports to ensure a successful transition into adult life.*

Education is a once in a lifetime opportunity to open children's hearts and minds to the unbelievable wonder of the universe."

– Sir Anthony Seldon

THREE PLEDGES

Pre-care

Supporting families at an early stage; providing targeted intensive support for children, young people and their families where the risk of entry into care is high; and ensuring that decisions about taking children into care are made without unnecessary delay and always in their best interests.

In-care

Securing earlier permanence and stability for children and young people in care and enabling them to build positive and supportive relationships; extending placement options; strengthening support for care givers; providing more effective regional specialist services; providing effective interventions to deal with particular challenges including: substance misuse, poor mental health and emotional well-being outcomes; criminalisation and poor educational outcomes.

After-care

Supporting children and young people returning home from care and their families; extending support for children and young people after-care, including care leavers, to help them make a successful transition into independent living as adults.

“Everybody’s a teacher if you listen.”
– Doris Roberts

Strategy: key findings to date 1

- Title needs to be changed
- Overwhelmingly positive
- Constructive feedback to enhance draft
- The voice of the child and young person informing policy
- Strengthen references to role of foster carers
- Enhance focus on relationship building
- Address staff turnover
- Impact of placement disruption
- More prominence to trauma and attachment behaviour

“The best way to make children good is to make them happy.”
– Oscar Wilde

Strategy: key findings to date 2

- Importance of suitable, safe and stable accommodation
- Revisit the care planning and pathways planning process
- Revisit the looked after children review process
- Review delegated authority for carers
- Revisit ongoing support for adopted families
- Focus on transition points within services (children to adult; for CWD; between CAMHS and AMHS)
- Consider workforce issues such as advocacy, skill mix, play training, retention

If you don't feel safe as a child, you can't learn."
– Lady Gaga

Strategy: key findings to date 3

- Detail on extending support to care leavers – ETE, Welfare Reform, housing support
- Address equality issues around sexual orientation and identity
- Detail on access to range of leisure activities
- Minimise criminalisation and introduction of restorative practice
- Introduction of befrienders/ volunteers/ peer mentors

*“Develop a passion for learning. If you do,
you will never cease to grow.”*
– Anthony J. D'Angelo

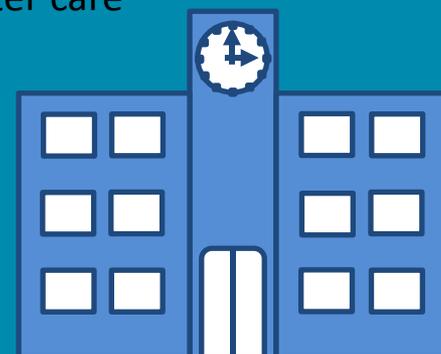


37% of children placed in kinship foster care achieved 5 or more GCSE at grades A* - C compared to 6% of children placed in Residential Care in 2014/15



38% of children placed in residential care were cautioned or convicted of an offence compared to 3% of those placed in foster care

18% of children placed in residential care were suspended from school compared to 6% of those placed in foster care



*Neither comprehension nor learning can
take place in an atmosphere of anxiety.”*
– Rose Kennedy

83% of care leavers aged 16 - 18 whose last placement was foster care were in ETE compared to **57%** of those whose last placement was Residential Care

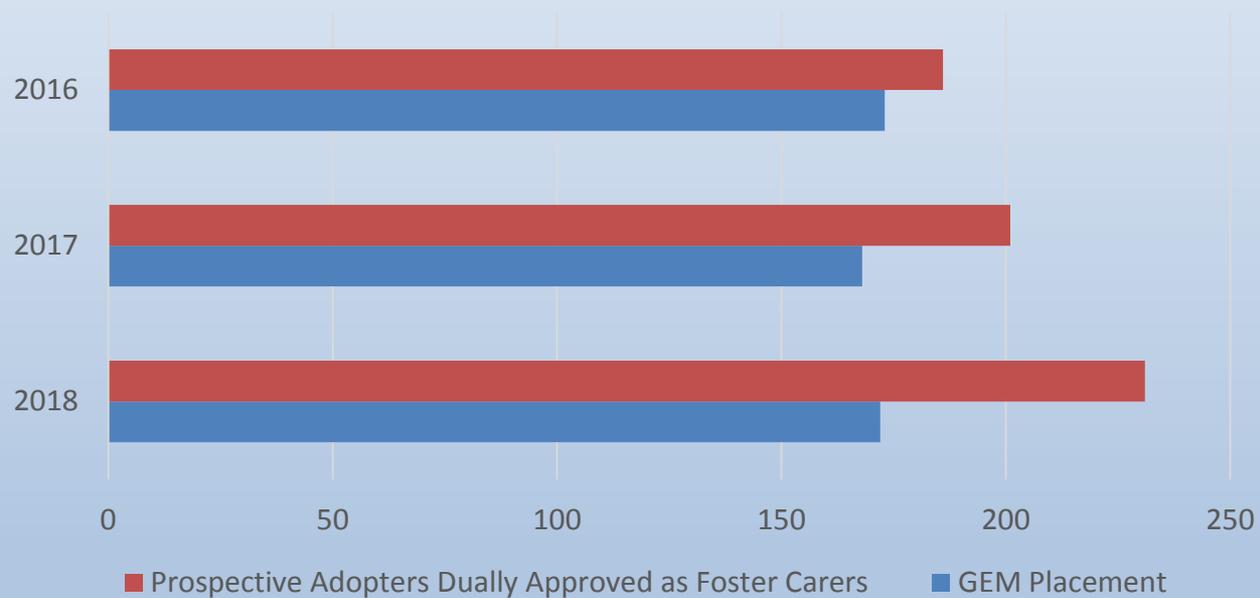


79% of care leavers aged 16 - 18 whose last placement was foster care achieved GCSEs or other qualifications compared to **35%** of those whose last placement was Residential Care

44% of Care Leavers Aged 19 whose last placement was residential care were in ETE compared to **76%** of those whose last placement was Foster Care

Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today.”
– Malcolm X

Registered Foster Carers Approved who also provide a GEM Placement or are Prospective Adopters Dually Approved as Foster Carers



Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them.”
– James Baldwin

Strategy: key findings to date on learning & achievement 1

- A stable education – minimise impact of placement moves
- Joint role of education and social care in schools
- Delegated authority for school activities
- Key staff member in schools with knowledge of care
- Informing carer about child's progress and training to better support child's learning
- Extending additional school resource to children adopted from care

“A child educated only at school is an uneducated child.”
– George Santayana

Strategy: key findings to date on learning & achievement 2

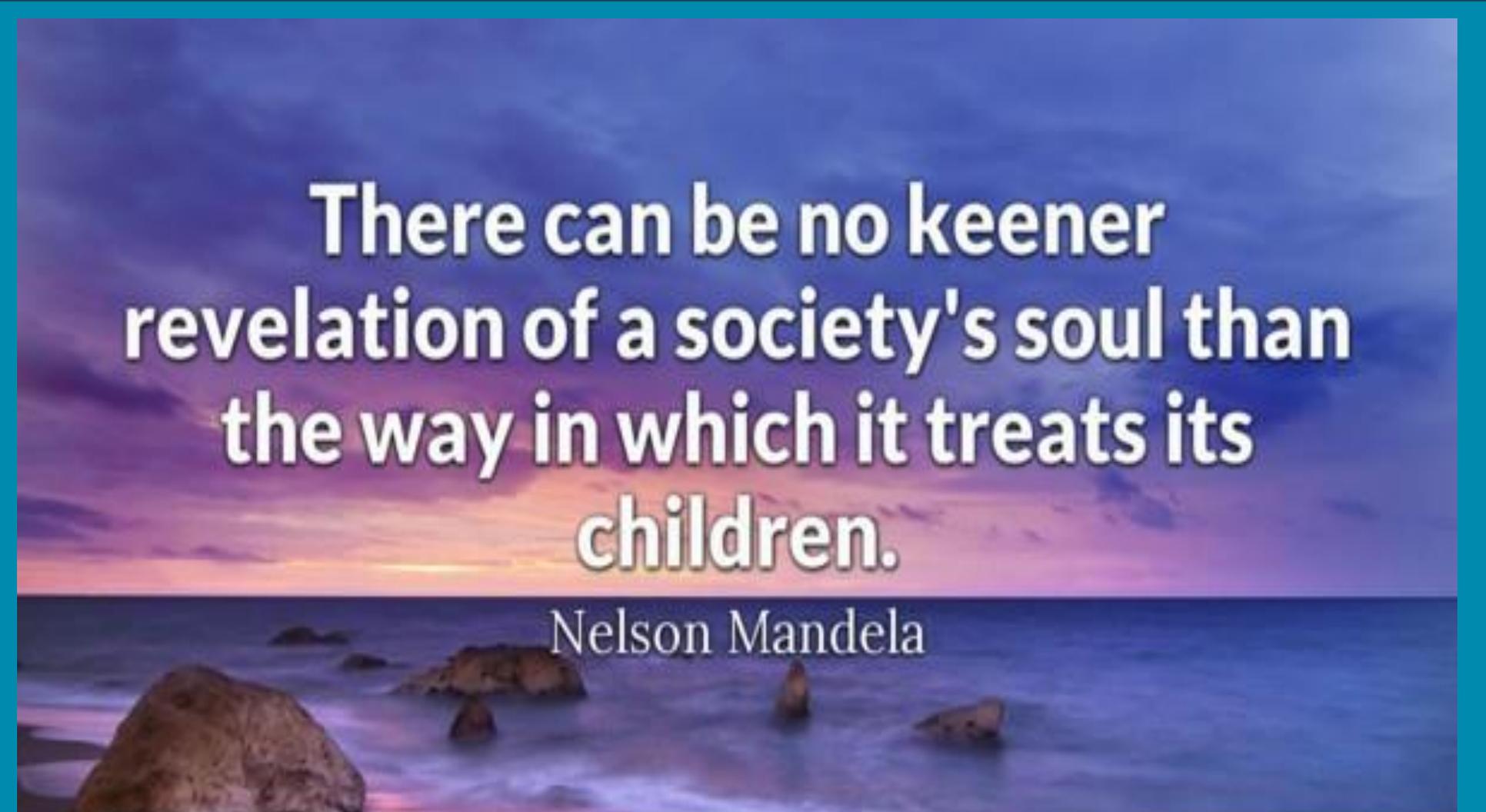
- Expanding nurture units
- Giving priority to admissions criteria
- Reducing bureaucracy with PEPs and SEN
- Do not focus on academic success only
- Support for 18 + needs to be consistent across NI
- Targeted teacher training, particularly on trauma and attachment
- Establishing mechanisms and providing support to enable 2nd chance learning

*“The more that you read, the more things
you will know, the more that you learn, the
more places you’ll go.”*
– Dr. Seuss

Transformation: ongoing work

- Workforce: Signs of Safety; ACEs; review of skill mix; leadership and mentoring training;
- Carers (fostering and residential): therapeutic support
- Fostering: recruitment, support hub networks; creating more specialist placements
- Residential care: peripatetic teams, rapid response teams
- Specialist care: change programme to review service model and pathways to specialist care
- ACB: legislation to place PEPs on a statutory basis; duty on HSCTs to have regard to impact on education when considering placement moves
- Piloting new housing solutions
- Creating post permanence support teams

“Education breeds confidence. Confidence breeds hope. Hope breeds peace.”
– Confucius



**There can be no keener
revelation of a society's soul than
the way in which it treats its
children.**

Nelson Mandela

 BrainyQuote®