

Shared Education Bill

[AS INTRODUCED]

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Make provision in relation to shared education.

BE IT ENACTED by being passed by the Northern Ireland Assembly and assented to by Her Majesty as follows:

“Shared education”

1.—(1) This section applies for the purposes of—

(a) section 2; and

5 (b) section 2(3) of, and paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 1 to, the Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (duty of Education Authority to encourage, facilitate and promote shared education).

(2) “Shared education” means the education together of—

(a) those of different religious belief, including reasonable numbers of both Protestant and Roman Catholic children or young persons; and

10 (b) those who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation and those who are not,

which is secured by the working together and co-operation of two or more relevant providers.

(3) In subsection (2) “relevant provider” means a person providing—

15 (a) education at a grant-aided school, or

(b) services of any kind (including youth services) which provide educational benefit to children or young persons or which are ancillary to education.

20 (4) Words and expressions which are defined in Article 2(2) of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 have the same meaning in this section as in that Order.

Power to encourage and facilitate shared education

2.—(1) The bodies listed in subsection (2) may encourage and facilitate shared education.

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(2) The bodies are—

- (a) the Department of Education;
- (b) the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools;
- (c) the Youth Council for Northern Ireland; and
- 5 (d) the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment.

Commencement of duty of Education Authority in relation to shared education

10 **3.**—(1) Section 7 of the Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (commencement) is amended as follows.

(2) In subsection (2) omit paragraphs (a) and (d).

(3) After subsection (2) insert—

15 “(2A) The following provisions come into operation on the day after the day on which the Shared Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 receives Royal Assent—

- (a) section 2(3);
- (b) paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 1.”.

Short title and commencement

20 **4.**—(1) This Act may be cited as the Shared Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2015.

(2) This Act comes into operation on the day after the day on which it receives Royal Assent.