



# Interim Strategic Plan

2017 - 2027



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**Our Vision:** To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be

**Our Mission:** To provide a high quality education for every child

**Our Values:** Openness, Respect, Reflection, Responsibility, Excellence, Equality

## Our Strategic Priorities:

Meeting the  
**LEARNING**  
needs of our  
children and  
young people

Providing  
**EXCELLENT**  
education  
support  
services

Developing **ALL**  
**OUR PEOPLE**  
to carry out  
their jobs  
successfully

Managing our  
**RESOURCES**  
effectively and  
efficiently

**NURTURING**  
**LEADERSHIP**  
across the EA to  
give clear direction  
in a dynamic  
and complex  
environment

L E A R N

# 1 FOREWORD

**This is an exciting time as we publish our first interim Strategic Plan for the period 2017-2027.**

The Education Authority is a relatively new organisation serving everyone in the region. The services it provides are the cornerstone of a successful society, growing educated and confident children and young people. We are focused on ensuring that we will do the best we can for all our children and young people.

The EA is working in a challenging context that will drive the need for change. I know that there is a workforce of talented and skilled people working for the Authority across Northern Ireland, who are committed to meeting these challenges and who will adapt to these changes in a positive way.

As we publish our interim Strategic Plan I want to acknowledge the thoughtful contributions of our Board Members, key Education Partners, Principals and Staff whose suggestions have been invaluable in helping us in developing our plan.

This interim Strategic Plan sets out our vision ‘to inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be’. It provides a framework for our work and showcases how we will develop and monitor our services to schools, Boards of Governors, teachers, parents, young people and children as we move towards our goal of improving educational achievement.

Whilst it is impossible for any document to capture everything the EA does or is trying to achieve, I hope this plan creates a unity of purpose as well as a basis on which we can move forward.

This plan begins by outlining our Vision, Mission and Values which will be central to everything we do. The strategic priorities will provide the framework to achieve our Vision.

I recognise that the current financial situation creates substantial challenges for the Authority. The expectations and needs of young people, their families and the communities in which we operate are increasing. We can no longer provide the same services in the same way and we will transform the way we deliver our services. Difficult decisions must be made but our focus will be on the young people whose lives are directly or indirectly affected by the services we provide.

All our activities will support, be complementary to and be driven by the range of education-related aspects of the emerging Programme for Government and the Young People’s Strategy and in support of the Department of Education’s Corporate Goals. We are working to improve educational outcomes; reduce educational inequality; improve child development; improve the quality of education and enhance the skills profile of the population.



Through our journey of transformation, children and young people will remain at the heart of everything we do. I want this organisation to be engaged with people. All of us have a shared interest in improving outcomes for children and young people within our society to help them be the best that they can be.



*Sharon O'Connor – Chairperson*



'To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be'



# 2

## INTRODUCTION

**The Education Authority was established on 1 April 2015 and since then we have been transforming the structures and functions bringing together the five former Education and Library Boards to create a single organisation. The Education Authority is one of the largest educational bodies in the United Kingdom and a major employer in Northern Ireland.**

This plan describes how we will continue our journey to support and challenge schools as they work to achieve positive outcomes for young people. We have a statutory duty to deliver and implement Department of Education (DE) and the Department of the Economies' policies and to develop strategies which help to improve the education system. We work in partnership with a significant number of organisations and stakeholders from Education, Health and District Councils. We are also the overall planning authority for the schools estate and responsible for ensuring efficient and sufficient provision across Northern Ireland and access to high quality education in viable and sustainable schools. Our statutory planning role will support the emerging Programme for Government indicators and supporting actions such as continuing and increasing momentum in Area Planning to implement the (DE) Sustainable Schools Policy.

We have a key role working with all Government Departments and other stakeholders to ensure the success of Northern Ireland. We will work towards this by educating and equipping our young people to reach their full potential as citizens. In all our efforts we will aim to contribute to the establishment of an equal, flourishing society which contributes to the wider needs of all. We will also endeavour to contribute in a positive way, to the health, development and wellbeing of all our children, young people and the communities in which they live.

This 10-year Strategic Plan sets out how we will carry out our core business, achieve our priorities and contribute to key partnerships in accordance with Northern Ireland's Programme for Government.

The Education Authority will deliver this plan in support of the Department of Education and the Department of Economy and in collaboration with our schools and through a highly engaged and talented workforce of 40,000 teaching and support staff.

This Strategic Plan will be supported by 3 yearly Corporate Plans and Annual Business Plans. These plans will be reviewed and monitored during the life of the Strategic Plan to ensure there is sufficient flexibility to take account of the long-term outcomes for society outlined in the emerging Programme for Government.

We recognise that we rely on our people to deliver and improve our services. To help us work towards our vision, our plan has set out values which will form a foundation for all we do. These values will guide our behaviours, attitudes and the way we work. We will ensure that all our people have the relevant skills, knowledge and development opportunities to make our vision a reality.





'To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be'



# 3

## WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO



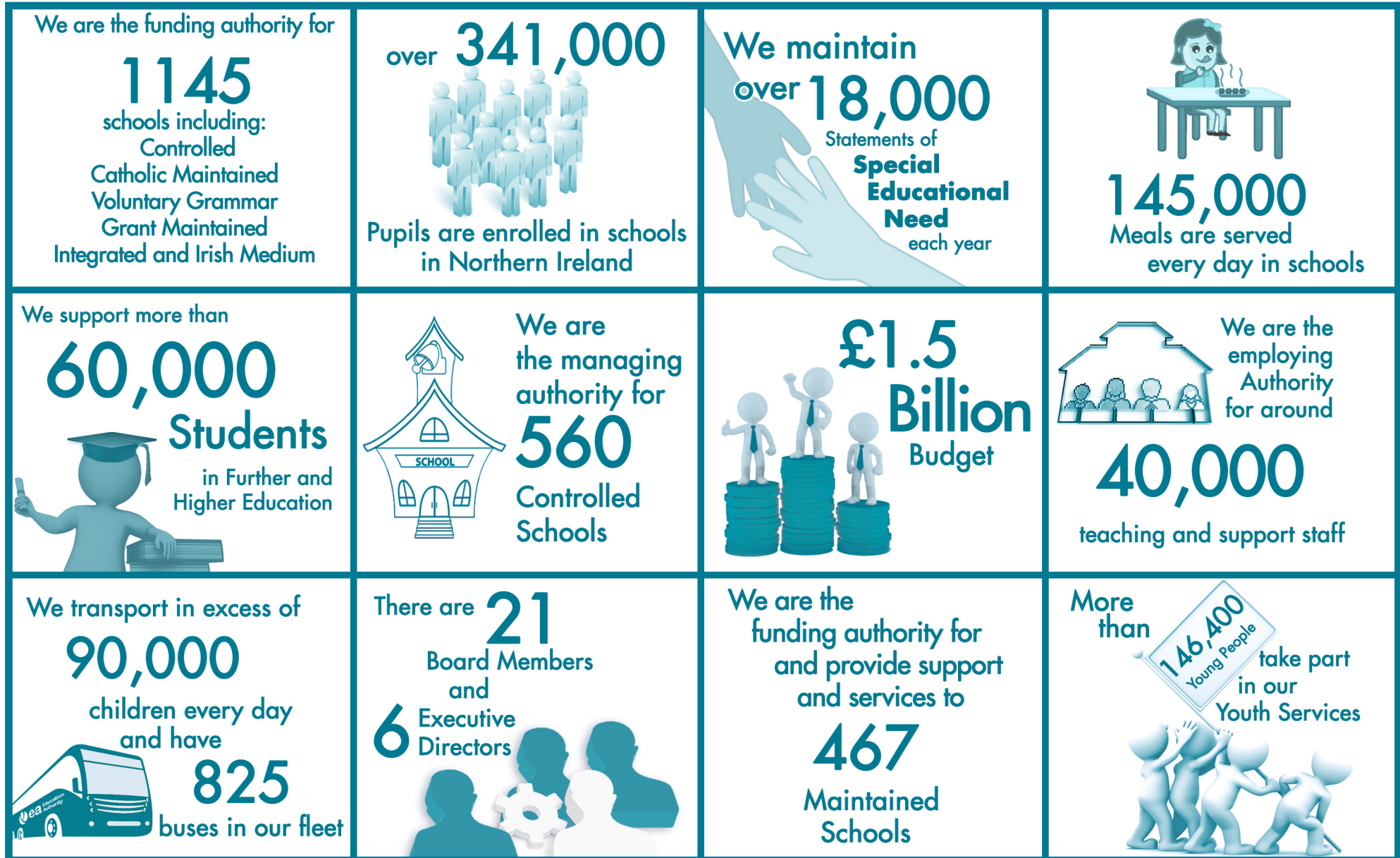
### A look at who we are ...

The EA is a regional body with responsibility for the provision and delivery of education services in Northern Ireland. The Authority is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department of Education and the Department for the Economy. We are responsible under legislation, to the Department of Education for ensuring that efficient and effective primary and secondary education and educational services are available to meet the needs of children and young people and for ensuring the provision of efficient and effective youth services. We are also legally delegated to administer student finance on behalf of the Department for the Economy.

The EA is also the employing authority for all staff at Controlled Schools and non-teaching staff at Catholic Maintained Schools.

We work in partnership with a wide range of bodies which include: Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (CnaG); the Controlled Schools' Support Council (CSSC); the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS); the Governing Bodies Association NI (GBA); the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) and the Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC).

The 2014 Education Act created additional duties for the EA to encourage, facilitate and promote shared education and the community use of school premises and is the funding authority for voluntary grammar and grant-maintained integrated schools. Responsibility for regional youth services funding and support transferred from the Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNI) to the Education Authority on 1 April 2016, with funding for regional organisations earmarked.



Figures correct as at March 2017

# 4 CONTEXT

The Education Authority will play an important role in shaping the future of Northern Ireland. The NI Executive's Programme for Government will identify Strategic Outcomes which will describe the society we wish to create for the benefit of all. In this context, the EA will work with Government Departments and other organisations to deliver outcomes for improving the life chances of children and young people.

All our strategic priorities, planned outcomes and medium term corporate objectives will align to and are complementary with the Programme for Government and DE Corporate Goals:

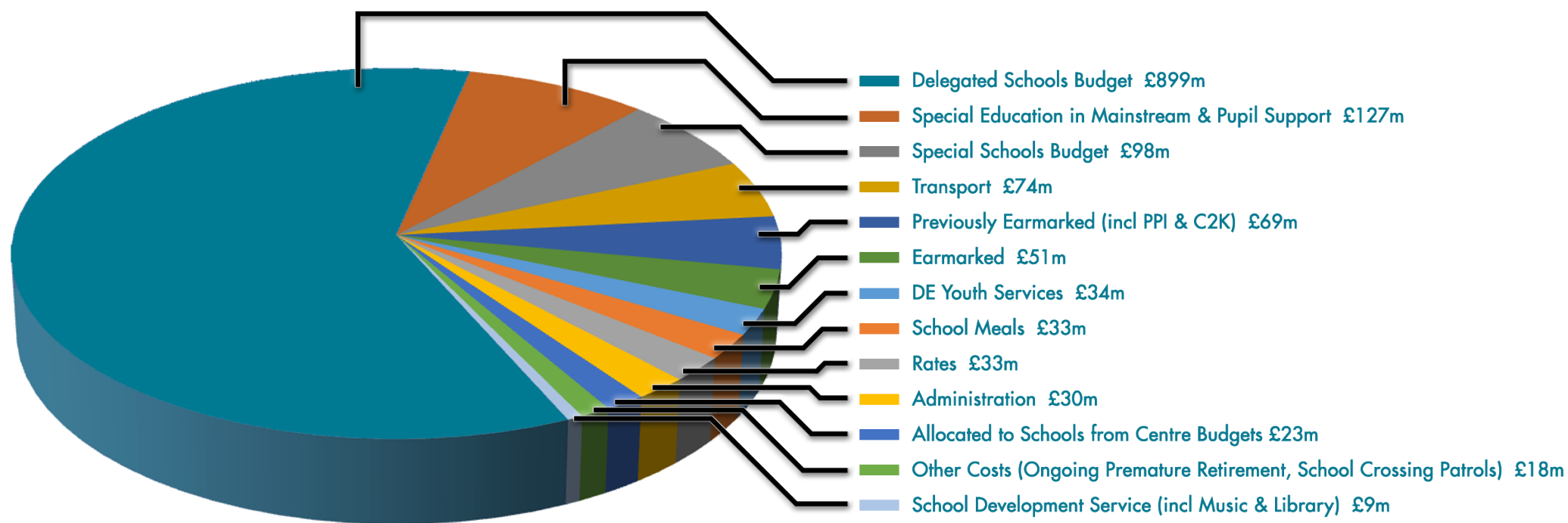
1. Improving the wellbeing of children and young people
2. Raising standards for all
3. Closing the performance gap, increasing access and equality
4. Developing the education workforce
5. Improving the learning environment
6. Delivering high quality education services

Other factors that influence our work and present us with both opportunities and challenges include: our response to demographic changes; our contribution to bringing communities together; the impact of legislative and technological changes on how we work; the development of a Children and Young People's Strategy (2017-2027), our efforts to promote a more tolerant and equal society; bridging the existing attainment gap; reviewing systems of evaluation and optimising available data including from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and development (OECD); the realisation of effective partnering; making the best use of our resources and ensuring that we listen to our children and young people in influencing all that we do.

We have developed our plan in the context of diminishing public sector budgets and have recognised the need to manage our finances effectively and efficiently to ensure best value for tax payers. With less funding available, we will focus on our core activities, and we will be creative and innovative about how we meet our priorities.



Breakdown of EA £1.5 billion budget 2016-2017\*



\*NB this information refers to revenue budget only and does not include the capital budget allocation

# 5

## EDUCATION AUTHORITY – VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

### OUR VISION

#### What we want to do

To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be

### OUR MISSION

#### Why we exist

To provide a high quality education for every child

### OUR VALUES

**Our Plans will be built on clear Values which will guide the way we work, how we develop as an organisation and our decision making through the years ahead**

A culture of **OPENNESS** | **RESPECT** for all | **REFLECTION** on our practices | **RESPONSIBILITY** for our actions  
**EXCELLENCE** in all we do | A commitment to **EQUALITY**

## OUR VALUES

### Openness

We will promote a culture of openness and will be transparent and honest in our dealings with the public, our partners and colleagues.

### Respect

We will listen to and respect those we serve, as well as each other and will recognise effort, achievement and contribution.

### Reflection

We will be a learning organisation, reflecting and taking on board the lessons learned from our own experiences and from comparable organisations.

### Responsibility

We will act responsibly and acknowledge that our actions will impact on others. We will be helpful, conscientious, reliable and accountable for all our actions.

### Excellence

We will strive for quality in everything we do. We will behave professionally and take pride and ownership for everything we say and do.

### Equality

We will promote equality of opportunity through our employment practices, service delivery and engagement activities.





# 6

## OUR 10 - YEAR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our efforts will focus on helping our children and young people to have the maximum opportunity to **LEARN** and to develop into our citizens of tomorrow. The Strategic Priorities summarise “what” we will do to deliver our Vision and will determine our business plan objectives each year. Our Values describe “how” we will go about delivering these objectives.

L	E	A	R	N
Meeting the <b>LEARNING</b> needs of our children and young people	Providing <b>EXCELLENT</b> education support services	Developing <b>ALL OUR PEOPLE</b> to carry out their jobs successfully	Managing our <b>RESOURCES</b> effectively and efficiently	<b>NURTURING LEADERSHIP</b> across the EA to give clear direction in a dynamic and complex environment



By focusing on our Strategic Priorities, we will deliver the following outcomes:

LEARNING NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	EXCELLENCE	ALL OUR PEOPLE	RESOURCES	NURTURING LEADERSHIP
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A child-centred approach to all our activities</li> <li>2. Improved educational attainment</li> <li>3. Accessible and equitable high quality learning</li> <li>4. Increased community use of schools</li> <li>5. Young people develop aspirations for the future</li> <li>6. A 'Rights and Responsibilities-based culture' for Children and Young People</li> <li>7. A learning environment that improves the outcomes for children and young people</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. High quality, consistent and accessible services across Northern Ireland</li> <li>2. Strong partnerships and collaboration in service delivery</li> <li>3. Technology used to support efficient and effective services</li> <li>4. Meet the expectations of Parents, Principals and Partners</li> <li>5. Increased sharing of resources and best practice</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A workforce that is highly capable engaged and empowered</li> <li>2. An organisation where people want to work</li> <li>3. Develop people who work across boundaries as part of multi-disciplinary teams</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Resources used in a sustainable way</li> <li>2. Effective use of estate to promote community access</li> <li>3. Effective and efficient use of resources</li> <li>4. An environment that works for all</li> <li>5. Available funding maximised</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Good Governance</li> <li>2. Highly capable leaders and managers who develop engaged and performing teams</li> <li>3. Appropriate accountability and reporting systems</li> <li>4. Effective systems of external and internal communications</li> <li>5. Working in Partnerships</li> </ol>

## MEDIUM-TERM CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

### by 31 March 2020:

<p>Meeting the <b>LEARNING</b> needs of our children and young people</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish approaches to improve the outcomes of all children and young people</li> <li>2. Work with schools and other partners to build an education system in which increasingly autonomous schools collaborate and support each other to improve</li> <li>3. Support and challenge schools to improve provision and increase their capacity to identify and effect school improvement</li> <li>4. Develop a regional approach to the delivery of the current Special Educational Needs (SEN) framework</li> <li>5. Work with stakeholders to improve outcomes for children and young people who are at risk of social exclusion</li> <li>6. Develop a youth service in accordance with recommendations from Priorities for Youth</li> </ol>
<p>Providing <b>EXCELLENT</b> education support services</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Undertake reviews of services to ensure harmonisation, equitable provision and to maximise efficiency</li> <li>2. Develop and implement a protocol for partnership working with other agencies</li> <li>3. Establish an ICT Strategy for the EA, its schools and C2k to drive service improvement, modernise and maximise the use of ICT for customer facing services and the delivery of high quality teaching and learning</li> <li>4. Determine baseline levels of stakeholder satisfaction</li> <li>5. Establish a School Principals' Group (representative of Management type and sector)</li> <li>6. Develop the capacity of schools to support each other on their improvement journeys</li> </ol>
<p>Developing <b>ALL OUR PEOPLE</b> to carry out their jobs successfully</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and implement an Organisation Development Strategy that focuses on employee engagement, leadership and management capability as the enabler for change and high performance</li> <li>2. Create a culture of high performance through great line management, personal responsibility for learning, coaching and a framework for performance management</li> <li>3. Promote succession planning to make best use of our talented workforce and ensure that we can deploy resources where and when they are needed</li> <li>4. Establish multi-disciplinary, cross-directorate working groups to drive continuous improvement and excellence in service delivery</li> </ol>



## MEDIUM-TERM CORPORATE OBJECTIVES by 31 March 2020: *continued*

<p>Managing our <b>RESOURCES</b> effectively and efficiently</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work with DE and stakeholders to deliver a network of viable and sustainable schools</li> <li>2. Encourage, facilitate and promote Shared Education by developing the use and sharing of the schools' estate including shared campuses</li> <li>3. Ensure that the EA estate is safely maintained and is efficiently used</li> <li>4. Achieve full Centre of Procurement Expertise (CoPE) accreditation across goods, services and construction</li> <li>5. Continue to have a balanced budget and demonstrate improved value for money</li> <li>6. Develop and roll out an agreed location strategy</li> <li>7. Establish an Energy and Sustainability policy</li> <li>8. Identify and obtain future funding opportunities for specific projects</li> <li>9. Improve processes to manage resources efficiently and effectively</li> </ol>
<p><b>NURTURING LEADERSHIP</b> across the Education Authority to give clear direction in a dynamic and complex environment</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve School Governance to empower school leadership</li> <li>2. Work with DE and other stakeholders to support the implementation of professional learning strategies for all staff</li> <li>3. Establish and implement performance reporting</li> <li>4. Create a culture to encourage leadership at all levels</li> <li>5. Develop and implement appropriate strategies, policies and procedures to deliver world class internal and external communications</li> <li>6. Create mechanisms and structures to develop community partnerships</li> <li>7. Develop Strategies in support of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)</li> </ol>

# 9 OUR 'PLAN ON A PAGE'

## OUR VISION *What we want to do*

To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be

## OUR MISSION *Why we exist*

To provide a high quality education for every child

## OUR VALUES – WILL GUIDE HOW WE WORK

Openness	Respect	Reflection	Responsibility	Excellence	Equality
A culture of openness	Respect for all	Reflection on our practices	Responsibility for our actions	Excellence in all we do	Commitment to Equality
<b>L</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>N</b>

Meeting the **LEARNING** needs of our children and young people

Providing **EXCELLENT** education support services

Developing **ALL OUR PEOPLE** to carry out their jobs successfully

Managing our **RESOURCES** effectively and efficiently

**NURTURING LEADERSHIP** across the EA to give clear direction in a dynamic and complex environment

1. A child-centred approach to all our activities
2. Improved educational attainment
3. Accessible and equitable high quality learning
4. Increase community use of schools
5. Young people develop aspirations for the future
6. A 'Rights and Responsibilities-based culture' for Children and Young People
7. A learning environment that improves the outcomes for children and young people

1. High quality, consistent and accessible services across Northern Ireland
2. Strong partnerships and collaboration in service delivery
3. Technology used to support efficient and effective services
4. Meet the expectations of Parents, Principals and Partners
5. Increased sharing of resources and best practice

1. A workforce that is highly capable engaged and empowered
2. An organisation where people want to work
3. Develop people who work across boundaries as part of multi-disciplinary teams

1. Resources used in a sustainable way
2. Effective use of estate to promote community access
3. Effective and efficient use of resources
4. An environment that works for all
5. Available funding maximised

1. Good Governance
2. Highly capable leaders and managers who develop engaged and performing teams
3. Appropriate accountability and reporting systems
4. Effective systems of external and internal communications
5. Working in Partnerships





'To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be'





Chief Executive's Office  
Education Directorate  
Children and Young People's Directorate  
Operations and Estates Directorate  
Finance and ICT Directorate  
Human Resources Directorate

40 Academy Street  
Belfast  
BT1 2NQ

028 9056 4000

**[www.eani.org.uk](http://www.eani.org.uk)**  
**email: [info@eani.org.uk](mailto:info@eani.org.uk)**



@Ed\_Authority