

**SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY (SLT) REGIONAL TASK FORCE
NEWSLETTER**

Issue 1: December 2006

The Report of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY), the 'Overview of Speech and Language Therapy Provision in Northern Ireland', recommended that a Task Force be set up to review speech and language therapy (SLT) services for children and young people.

Lord Rooker **subsequently** announced the setting up of the Task Force at the Regional Conference on SLT in March 2006. Establishing the Task Force, nominating members, setting objectives and a date for completing the work is the responsibility of the Special Education Needs Inter-Departmental Group (SEN IDG), which comprises officials from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Department of Education.

The Task Force has now been established and is chaired by Dr Pamela Hannigan, Allied Health Professional (AHP) Commissioner in the Northern Health and Social Services Board (NHSSB). The membership of the Task Force encompasses a wide spectrum of people responsible for policy **development**, provision and delivery of SLT, **the education sector**, voluntary group representatives and parents.

The Task Force had its first meeting in September 2006 and met again in early November to **agree** the Terms of Reference and **develop** a workplan. **Team members** have been **split** into working groups based on the Terms of Reference and individual areas of expertise.

A further meeting took place on 8th December at which the Terms of Reference were **signed off** and membership of the working groups finalised. **A range of people have been co-opted to support the work of the groups which will report back to the Task Force on a monthly basis.**

The Task Force will produce a newsletter after each meeting to keep stakeholders updated on progress. The work is scheduled to be completed in June 2007 after a period of consultation.

Membership of the Task Force

Pamela Hannigan	Chairperson
Mildred Bell	SLT Services Manager, NHSSB
Gillian Boyd	Special Education
Patricia Bray	Disability Action
Carmel Cassidy	SLT Services Manager, WHSSB
Linda Erwin	Child Care Co-ordinator
Joan Hamilton	Educational Psychologist
Ann Hardy	Children's Services Planning, NHSSB
Nuala McArdle	AHP Advisor. DHSSPSNI
Alison McCullough	Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists
Raymond McFeeters	Principal, Thornfield Special School
Claire McGartland	AHP Commissioner, WHSSB
Geraldine McQuillan	Parent
Eithne Mullen	Belfast Education and Library Board (ELB)
Ruth Nesbitt	Head of SLT, Craigavon and Banbridge Trust
Mary O'Neill	Parent and Chairperson of Foyle Action Coalition
Aileen Patterson	Academic Co-ordinator of SLT, Jordanstown
Billy Tate	Principal, Belvoir Park Primary School
Michelle Tennyson	AHP Commissioner, EHSSB
Mary Wright	Parent and Apasic NI Director
Valerie Young	Assistant Senior Education Officer, SELB
Barbara McCreesh	Head of SLT, N&W Belfast Trust

Date of Next Meeting: Friday 12 January 2007