

# Director's Report

Paddy Kelly



**2005-2006** was an extremely busy year for the Children's Law Centre with demand for our services exceeding the number of hours available. CHALKY dealt with over 1500 issues during the year with the children's right to education being the issue in respect of which we received the most calls. We represented in an increasing number of tribunals this year and lodged proceedings in four Judicial Reviews including in L, A Minor by T Mc M v Sandleford Special School and NEELB [2005] when the High Court granted a declaration of illegality in respect of the suspension of a child with moderate learning difficulties from a special school for a period in excess of the 45 day maximum statutory period. In addition for the first time we intervened as third party intervenors in conjunction with the Children's Commission in a Judicial Review in relation to the introduction of the Anti-Social Behaviour (NI) Order 2005 (Peter Neill [2005] NIQB66). Whilst most of the cases referred to our casework meeting are resolved we continue to operate our strategic litigation strategy focusing this year on the child's right to education, non discrimination and equality and the child's right to the provision of services under the Children (NI) Order 1995. And for those children, young people and adults who don't call CHALKY our web site, which has already received over 6 million hits, continues to provide an excellent range of accessible information.

Throughout the year and despite the loss of a dedicated trainer CLC has strategically continued to provide training to children, young people and professionals working with and for children. Without a dedicated trainer we cannot begin to meet the demand and need for training on for example the UNCRC and the Human Rights Act 1998. This is particularly worrying given that CLC is the only organisation in this

jurisdiction providing such training. The search continues to resource the much needed training post.

As we build up to the next examination of the UK government's implementation of the UNCRC by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child our focus remains on monitoring and promoting government's compliance. In addition to engaging in the UNCRC Day of General Discussion we have continued to promote the CRC practically through the delivery of training on a children's rights approach to children's services planning. In addition we advocated strongly for the Children's Strategy to be grounded in the CRC and for it to be the delivery tool for the Convention. Our work on children's rights indicators and child impact assessment remains cutting edge in the development of "tools" to make children's rights a reality.

CLC's policy work has continued to develop. We continue to reference international human rights standards and the domestic equality duty (s75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998) as the benchmark against which all legislation and policy should be measured. Given the huge potential s75 presents to protect and promote the rights of children we are increasingly concerned at the failure of public authorities to discharge their statutory equality duties. This was most starkly presented this year in respect of the Policing Board/Police Service of Northern Ireland's proposed introduction of Tasers into this jurisdiction. Through the intervention of CLC this proposal has been referred back to the PSNI to enable them to properly discharge their s75 duties. We will continue to monitor the situation to ensure they do so.

As always youth@clc have continued to advocate on children's rights in challenging and innovative ways. Such were their

achievements this year that it is hard to highlight one, but undoubtedly their DVD, produced in collaboration with Parents Advice Centre, was one of the most powerful messages I have ever heard about the denial of Art 12, the child's right to be heard, in family proceedings. Our challenge now is to ensure that right is guaranteed in this most important arena of children's rights.

Given the work output of CLC we sometimes forget that the engine of the centre, the Administration team consists of only two people. Their ability to deliver such high quality support and administration continues to amaze. Thank you both.

CLC is indebted to the many volunteers who have worked with us over the year. In particular I would like to thank Claire Bradley whose stalwart support for children's rights and CLC lives on in her new role as Children's Rights Voluntary Worker with youth@clc. Her experience as a long term activist with youth@clc is a priceless resource to the CLC and in particular youth@clc.

The other group of volunteers to which we owe big thanks is our dedicated Management Committee. The diversity of experience of the Committee provides us with a rich source of advice and support, which is given generously and without reservation. I would also like to record my personal thanks to our Chair, Anne Marie Kelly who throughout the year has been at the end of the phone whenever needed.

It is a real privilege to work with such professional and dedicated staff, volunteers and management committee. Working with such a team always inspires and reassures, in those rare moments of doubt, that together we can make a reality of children's rights.

# Chairperson's Report

It has been a momentous year for the Children's Law Centre, not least because CLC held its Inaugural Annual Lecture delivered by Baroness Hale, Lord of Appeal in Ordinary. The Lecture addressed the issue of a child's voice being heard in Public Law Proceedings and indeed touched upon possibilities of involvement of a child in relation to Private Law Proceedings. The calibre of the speaker ensured a high turn out of her Judicial Colleagues in this Jurisdiction at what would otherwise be perceived as a graveyard slot, i.e. a Friday afternoon in Summer Recess! Indeed the subsequent question and answer session proved to be both interesting and informative. After Baroness Hale's insightful lecture we are confident that if a child wishes to be heard in the decision making process there will be an accommodating and considerate Judicial ear! I recognise the considerable demands on the Centre in organising such a high profile Lecture and publicising it to secure such a high attendance. This, the Inaugural Annual Lecture has set a high bench mark for the future Annual Lectures.

Baroness Hale also visited the Centre and was manifestly impressed by the work of youth@clc in their ground breaking DVD entitled "Are You Really Listening". The DVD addresses in very stark terms, the feelings of young people who feel dispossessed and alienated through breakdown of family life and their perception that the Court Process doesn't allow for their voice to be heard. Baroness Hale was particularly well looked after by Cathal Rooney of youth@clc who continued to engage with her through the question and answer session following her Lecture.

Whilst June was a busy time for the Centre in hosting the Inaugural Lecture, August proved to be even busier. The Seventeenth Congress of the IAYFJM was held in Belfast for one week at the Waterfront Hall. The Children's Law Centre were represented in attendances and also through Paddy Kelly Chairing one of the Workshops and sitting on the Expert Panel who drafted the Conference recommendations. In addition as an attendee at the Congress myself, I was proud to note that youth@clc, working in partnership with Include Youth's Young Voices, were the only children and young people presenting at the conference. I have no doubt that they added a particularly pertinent and much needed presence at the event, lending their informed views on the rights of the child and how they should best be protected. The week was capped by the attendance at the Centre on the 30th August 2006 of Professor Jaap Doek, Chairperson of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, to present a Lecture, co-hosted with Save the Children. Professor Doek provided a stimulating and very personal glimpse into how the Committee operates and the Reporting process to be followed by each State Party on their five yearly reporting cycles. Other speakers at the seminar, Sara Boyce CLC/SCF, OFMDFM and NICCY, outlined how the UK is

required to answer the Committee's previous criticisms and suggestions as to how the rights of the child should be protected. It was a very thought provoking and informal discussion and Professor Doek made a number of points which no doubt we will refer to during the course of our reporting on behalf of the sector to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

CLC has again through the past year built on the already high profile it has acquired in human rights circles, underpinned by the stalwart, resolute and passionate commitment to the rights of the child lived and breathed by Paddy Kelly and her staff on a day to day basis. As a Practising Solicitor in the area of Family Law with a particular emphasis on the representation of children, I and so many of my colleagues have benefited from the expert deliverance of information and training programmes, by the Children's Law Centre and the legal team, headed by Tara Caul. The Training Sessions are proving to be invaluable sources of reference material, not only for members of the Legal Profession but also for the Guardian Ad Litem. Tara and her team have also published a series of important and accessible leaflets entitled "Do you know your rights?" on a range of issues relevant to young people such as employment, policing and youth justice. A new leaflet, to be published soon, entitled "Do you Know your Rights about Family Law" is a carefully researched guide to the myriad of Orders affecting children, not only in relation to residence and contact but also on practical issues such as maintenance from an absent parent. CLC also works in partnership with other individuals and organisations which is illustrated by the large number of committees on which Tara and other members of her Team sit and provide considerable assistance to. CLC have the unique benefit of an insight into the everyday problems impacting on children through the CHALKY Advice Line, an invaluable service for children and young people.

Whilst this past year has been an exciting and positive year for the Centre, I believe 2007 will hold even greater challenges in securing and promoting children's rights against a background of potential threat to children's lives through for example the introduction of Tasers and Mosquito devices. CLC has written an excellent response to the PSNI consultation document on the proposed introduction of Tasers. We will have to wait and see if the PSNI proceed despite the serious children's rights issues CLC have raised. Thankfully CLC is well equipped to meet the continuing needs and demands of a society where unfortunately the rights of the child have a low priority vis a vis other human rights and where more work is unfortunately needed to raise the profile of the inadequacies.

# Administration

**The vital work of the Administration team provides the underlying support for the entire centre. Whether producing annual budgets, supporting staff and client needs or reception services, their professional attitude and commitment to providing a quality service are paramount and have proved to be invaluable to the professional development of the CLC.**

**The Administration Team (Head of Finance and Administration) Helen Rafferty and (Receptionist/Administration Assistant) Ann-Marie McLaughlin are the small but vital key component in ensuring that the ever growing demands for the services of the Children's Law Centre are met by providing the vital tools and systems to enable the Centre to discharge its ever increasing workload. Without them CLC could not open its doors!**

# A legal service for children and young people



**D**ue to popular demand this year the legal unit reprinted most of CLC's leaflets for children and young people. We have recently updated and reprinted our leaflets on Employment and on Social Security taking into account recent changes to the law in Northern Ireland and are about to publish a new leaflet entitled Do You Know Your Rights About Family Law? The following leaflets are currently available free of charge for children and young people and can be accessed on our website:

- Do You Know Your Rights About Being Looked After/ Being in Care
- Do You Know Your Rights about Youth Justice
- Do You Know Your Rights under the Human Rights Act 1998
- Do You Know Your Rights about the UNCRC
- Do You Know Your rights About Suspensions and Exclusions
- Do You Know Your Rights About Social Security
- Do You Know Your Rights About Employment
- Do You Know Your Rights About Policing
- Do You Know Your Rights about Admissions to Post Primary Schools?



## Legal Infomation

All material produced by CLC including leaflets and publications is on our website. There are clearly marked sections for children and young people and for adults/advisers. There is a members' section containing the information pack and all submissions made by the centre which can be accessed by a pin code. We are delighted that there have now been over 6 million hits to the website!



Our information pack which is on line on our website contains the following sections:

- Children's Rights as Human Rights – including an analysis of recent case law
- Suspensions and Exclusions
- Special Educational Needs
- Employment
- Social Security
- Youth Justice
- Looked After Children
- Policing and Young People
- The Commissioner for Children & Young People
- The Rights of Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Young People
- New Arrangements for Children Leaving Care
- Children, Young People and Race Discrimination
- Children, Young People and Sex Discrimination
- Children, Young People and the Sexual Orientation Regulations

youth@clc has its own section of the website which we will continue developing throughout the year.

## Working in partnership

As ever we remain committed to working in partnership with other individuals and organisations to promote and realise children's rights. CLC has been represented on the following groups and associations:

- **CHILDREN ORDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE** – The Head of Legal Unit represents Children in Northern Ireland on this committee and has been involved in the work of the sub committees on mental health provision for children and young people and integrated family justice this year.
- **CHILDREN ARE UNBEATABLE**- The Head of Legal Unit represents CLC on this alliance which is lobbying for a change in the law to give children and young people the same protection from assault as adults and to promote positive ways of parenting. The government has now introduced Article 2 of the Law Reform Miscellaneous Provisions (NI) Order 2006 which came into force in Northern Ireland on 19 September 2006. This law does not completely remove the defence of reasonable chastisement and continues to allow this defence to be used in respect of common assaults against children. It is the view of the CLC that this law does not comply with international children's rights standards including the recommendations of the UNCRC. We will continue to seek full legal reform in Northern Ireland for children and young people.
- **MENTAL HEALTH REVIEW – SUB GROUP ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY**- The Head of Legal Unit represented CLC on this sub group for the last two years and has also made submissions to the sub group of the Review considering Child and Adolescent Mental Health provision in Northern Ireland.
- **NIACAB** – The Advice Line Co-ordinator has acted as external moderator of NIACAB's Adviser Training Programme during the year.
- **HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION FORUM** – The Education Solicitor represents CLC on this forum of educationalists, who

meet quarterly to discuss and review human rights and equality issues relevant to education and to share information on members' initiatives to promote human rights and equality in education.

- **JOINT CONSULTATIVE FORUM FOR EDUCATION SECTOR** – The Education Solicitor represents CLC on this forum. The Joint Forum meets, following the publication of annual reports by public authorities within the education sector on their implementation of equality schemes. The forum provides a link between public authorities in education, voluntary and community organisations, trade unions and the statutory equality authorities including NIHRC, Equality Commission and the Community Relations Council. This is particularly significant given the potential Section 75 and equality legislation has in guaranteeing the right to education to all children without discrimination.
- **COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE** – We meet regularly with NICCY and are developing a working protocol in respect of casework between the two organisations. This is working effectively in ensuring complimentary delivery of services.
- **MEETING WITH LEGAL SERVICES COMMISSION** – The Head of Legal Unit represents CLC on a group set up by the Legal Services Commission to consider the future role of the voluntary sector in the provision of legal services. Our focus is on the provision of independent legal advice services to children and young people, prioritisation of the legal needs of children and young people and the issue of independent representation.
- **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS FORUM** – this forum has been established by CLC to share information in relation to the law relating to special educational needs and is co-ordinated by the Education Solicitor at CLC.
- **NORTHERN IRELAND ANTI-BULLYING FORUM** – The Education Solicitor represents CLC on this forum, which is a regional inter-agency body, including the Department of Education, Educational Library Boards, teacher's representatives, other statutory education bodies and NGO's concerned with the issue of bullying.

- **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY GROUP** – The Education Solicitor is a member of this steering group, which provides support to the ongoing LACE Project which aims to work in partnership with three Trusts and Education and Library Boards to identify the specific needs of children in care/looked after children in education.

## Training Provided

- Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem Agency – "Children's Rights are Human Rights"- 27 June 2005.
- Northern Board Area Child Protection Committee – "Children's Rights are Human Rights"- 9 November 2005.
- North and West Belfast Trust – "Children's Rights are Human Rights" December 2005.
- Ulster Communities & Hospitals Trust – "Children's Rights are Human Rights" - 18 January 2006.
- South & East Belfast Trust – "Children's Rights are Human Rights"- 6 February 2006.

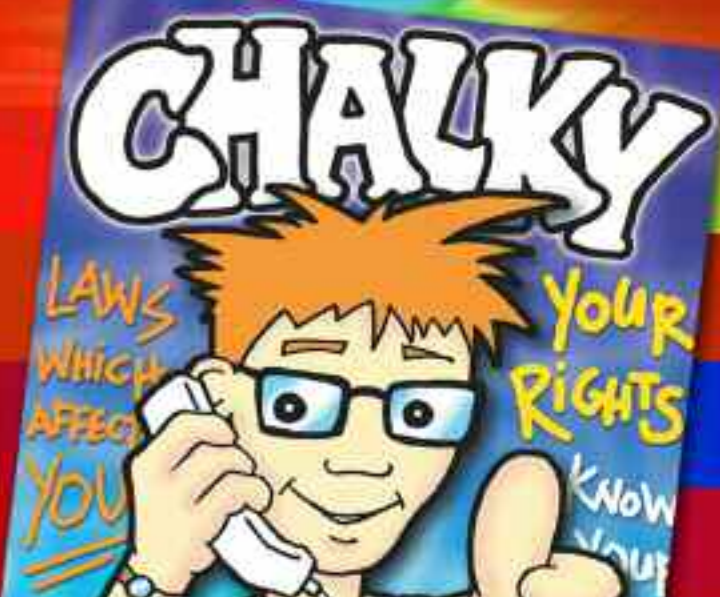
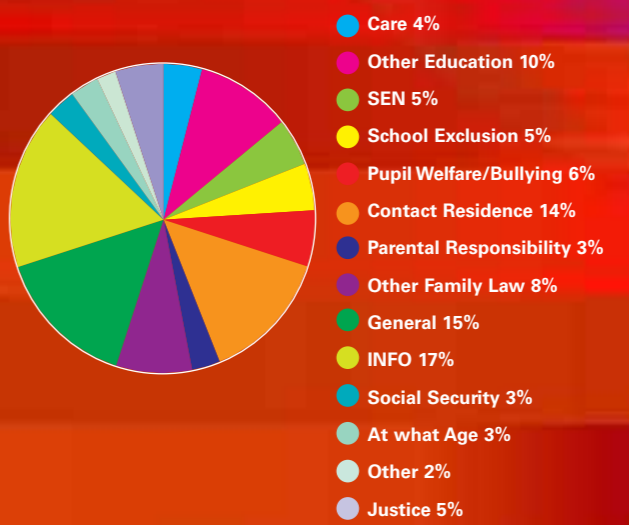
- The Child & Family Law – Human Rights Developments – Human Rights Centre/Queens University Belfast/SLS- Children's Rights are Human Rights – 'Children's Rights and Family Law'- 6 March 2006.
- Northern Board Area Child Protection Committee – "Children's Rights are Human Rights" – 22 March 2006
- The Equality and Discrimination solicitor has delivered a paper in relation to age discrimination and children and young people at the Age Conference for employers organised by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in March 2006 and has been involved in internal training for Equality Commission for Northern Ireland staff March 2006

During the year the Advice Manager, Advice Worker and Youth Support and Development Worker worked closely in delivering a large number of information and training sessions in schools, youth clubs etc. The 32 sessions across Northern Ireland raised awareness among children of their rights and of CLC's CHALKY service.

## CHALKY Advice Service

The centre's CHALKY advice service has continued to provide advice and information to increasing numbers of children, young people their parents and professionals working with children. The service dealt with some 1525 issues during the year from April 2005 to March 2006.

### CHALKY Issues: April 2005 - March 2006



The issues raised by clients covered the whole range of legal areas which impact on children. Family law issues accounted for 25% of issues raised with queries about the law on contact with children and where children should live accounting for over half of these. Education issues accounted for 26% of all issues raised. Within the broad field of education the main areas of concern were Special Educational Needs which accounted for one in five of calls in relation to education, school exclusions, pupil welfare, bullying and admissions were also frequently raised as issues. 17% of callers were requesting information materials about children's rights or the Centre. Other notable areas causing concern were Social Security (3%), Children in Care (4%) and Justice (5%).

In respect of age 56.8% of callers were either children and young people (7.8%) or adults phoning about a particular child or young person (49%). During the year there were also 70 requests for advice and information by email with 47 of these coming in the first three months of 2006.

During the year from April 2005- March 2006 we were able to obtain addresses from 66% of callers and of these 54% were from the Eastern Health and Social Services Board area, 21% from the Northern Board area, 14% from the Southern Board area and 11% from the Western Board area. During the year a new database was introduced to assist with the monitoring of calls to the advice service. The new database will enable us to provide more detailed analysis of calls to the advice line in the future.

The advice service provided representation at a number of Tribunals during the year. In one case a young client was successfully represented at a Social Security Appeals Tribunal, the Social Security Agency had wrongly decided that the young person was not entitled to Income Support. The Tribunal found that the decision was wrong and awarded the young person benefit, we have written to the Agency in the hope of avoiding future mistakes. In another case a school policy which prevented a disabled pupil who had to attend a unit for part of the week from being considered for pupil of the month was successfully challenged, the possibility of action under the Disability Discrimination Act, now extended to schools, was enough to get the policy amended. A number of other cases concerning Special Educational Needs, Home Tuition and care services were referred to the Centre's solicitors.

## Volunteers and Students

We owe a big thank you to all our volunteers and students. This work is invaluable to us and helps us to make detailed responses to legislation and policy and to formulate new policies which promote children's rights.

## Casework

CLC operates a casework policy and in accordance with our waiver agreement with the Law Society of Northern Ireland we represent children and young people in a limited number of strategic cases. We operate a referral service to accredited solicitors on the Children Order Panel throughout Northern Ireland and we maintain a panel of solicitors who are willing to deal with education cases.

The strategic casework areas for this year were the child's right to education, non discrimination and equality and the child's right to the provision of services under the Children (NI) Order 1995.

As a small organisation which is growing year upon year, we recognise the importance of clear, accessible procedures and are currently working towards the quality standard LEXCEL and have produced an office manual detailing case management and office procedures with a view to applying for accreditation this year.

During the year from April 2005 to March 2006, 83 cases were referred from the advice service to the casework meeting for further discussion and possible further action. The vast majority of these cases were able to be resolved by negotiation and clarification of the legal position. However in 27 of these cases the issue was taken on by the Centre for formal representation.

We represented two clients in applications to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal this year. In one case an appeal was lodged against the refusal of an education and library board to conduct a statutory assessment on behalf of a child with dyslexia and following judgement of the appeal the matter was withdrawn when the board agreed to conduct a statutory assessment of the child's special educational needs. In the second case, we provided representation at the appeal hearing for a child with Downs Syndrome when an education and library board refused

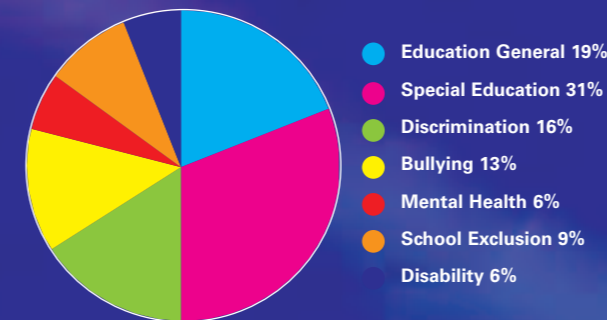
to quantify and specify speech and language therapy provision in Part 3 of the statement. The appeal was successful and following the tribunal's direction an amended statement was issued by the board specifying and quantifying such provision for the child in Part 3 of the statement and requiring Makaton sign training for the classroom assistant and any future classroom assistants working with the child up to level 4.

This year we also represented two children who were excluded from school for prolonged periods of time. CLC supported and assisted the parents in securing alternative school placements for both children. One of the children has learning difficulties and ADHD and was excluded from a special school due to his behaviour. He is due to commence a residential placement in September 2006. The other child returned to mainstream schooling in May 2006.

In a further expulsion case an eight year-old pupil at a Primary School was expelled from school. The school had not sought help from the education and library board support services. The Advice Manager represented the child at a School Expulsion Appeals Tribunal where the school's decision was overturned.

We lodged Judicial Review proceedings against an education and library board when it refused to provide outreach learning support at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice for a child with dyslexia. The Judicial Review was grounded on the basis that the decision did not take account of the child's individual special educational needs. The matter was settled prior to the leave hearing, when the matter was withdrawn from the Court and subsequently outreach learning support was provided by the education and library board for the child. This case was one of four Judicial Reviews lodged during the year, another of which related to a child with special educational needs who was excluded from school for a length of time exceeding the statutory limit of 45 days and who was receiving inadequate home tuition. In this judgment entitled *L.A Minor by T Mc M v Sandelford Special School and NEELB* [2005], the High Court granted a declaration of illegality in respect of the suspension of a child with moderate learning difficulties from a special school for a period in excess of the 45 day maximum statutory period. A challenge was also made in this case as to whether a blanket policy of providing only five hours per week home tuition for primary school children provided the child applicant with a suitable and effective education as required by Protocol One, Article 2 of the ECHR. This matter was not formally

Cases Opened: April 2005 - March 2006



adjudicated upon as by the time of hearing the home tuition level had risen to 15 hours per week, but the High Court did indicate that the starting point should not have been the premise that five hours was the current education board policy but rather the question which should have been posed was whether the provision would be suitable for the special educational needs of this particular child. Whilst precedent has not been established, this has been a useful case to cite in other cases relating to low levels of home tuition for children who are out of school.

We also had two additional ongoing complex Judicial Reviews relating to the provision of services to children in need under Articles 17 and 18 of the Children (NI) Order 1995. In these cases we have sought to confirm the rights of a child with Autism to occupational therapy provision and the rights of a child with complex disabilities to adequate respite care under these provisions. Appropriate services were ultimately provided to both of these children.

We formally intervened in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People in a High Court challenge in relation to the introduction of the Anti-Social Behaviour (NI) Order 2005, (*Peter Neill* [2005] NIQB66). We are now monitoring the impact of this legislation on children and young people.

# Policy Work

Policy work continues to be a priority area of work for the Children's Law Centre. This work seeks to inform and influence draft legislation and Government policy to ensure that all children and young people in Northern Ireland have their rights upheld in all aspect of their lives. The large number of responses to consultation we have submitted have been drafted from a child rights, human rights and section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 basis, benchmarking the proposals against the Government's human rights and equality duties and called for the Government to meet these obligations in developing policy and legislation. Some of the major responses made include our responses to the Anti-Poverty Strategy, the Review of Public Administration, the Northern Ireland Office's Operational Review of Section 75, the Draft Age Regulations, Priorities and Budgets, responses to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Police Service of Northern Ireland's (PSNI) policies and procedures on anti-social behaviour orders and the Draft Education Order. While we have had some notable success in influencing policy decisions and draft legislation over the last year, the lack of local political accountability continues to cause some frustration in ensuring the protection of children's rights through our policy work.

CLC continue to engage with independent human rights institutions and other NGO's to promote children's rights compliant policy and legislation including on very serious issues with right to life implications for children and young people, such as the proposed introduction of tasers in Northern Ireland. Our work in this instance resulted in the matter being referred back to the PSNI to carry out the necessary section 75 equality processes. We have employed the Freedom of Information Act 2000 on a number of occasions to obtain

vital information from public bodies and where necessary, the Equality Commission's statutory duty complaints mechanisms. We continue to use the media to highlight very serious child rights breaches. We have worked and continue to work directly with local politicians, partner organisations and government to ensure that rights and equality are included as an outcome in the final version of the ten year Children's Strategy.

Attendance at local party political conferences over the past twelve months has brought success in raising awareness of the work of CLC and our policy concerns. We continue to engage with local politicians through the circulation of briefing notes, responses to consultation exercises, summary responses and meeting with individual politicians. We continue to work closely with partner organisations and this work has been very important in raising awareness of our policy concerns and the obligations of Government to secure and protect children's rights not least through our membership of Children in Northern Ireland's (CiNI) Policy Sub-Group, the All-Party Working Group on Children and Young People and the Equality Coalition.

As always, the input of youth@clc has been invaluable to the policy work carried out by CLC staff. Consultations with youth@clc have formed the basis of some major consultation responses over the past year and further direct consultation with youth@clc, the Road to Rights Project Participants and Fermanagh Shadow Youth Council for the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on the Amendments to the Employment of Children Regulations consultation has ensured that children and young people are having their views and concerns fed directly to Government.

CHALKY Freephone Helpline: 0808 808 5678

## Children's Human Rights Advisor

Securing implementation by government of the standards contained in the UNCRC at legislative, policy and service provision levels is the key focus of the work of this post. This overall aim has been progressed this year in a number of different ways.

Monitoring of the UK government's compliance with the UNCRC by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child ensures international accountability for its children's rights obligations and is a process to which the Children's Law Centre attaches great significance. The UK government is due to report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child by July 2007. Children's Law Centre participated in the UK government's formal launch of its reporting process in March 2006, making a presentation and facilitating three young people to attend. CLC along with Save the Children facilitated NGO participation in the previous UK reporting and examination process and submitted an alternative report - we intend to adopt a broadly similar approach this time around. We have engaged in early discussions with the Children and Young People's Unit, OFMDFM in respect of their need to develop a participatory consultative process around government's report. We have also been in discussion with NICCY in relation to their role, as an Independent Human Rights Institution, in the process.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child hold an annual Day of General Discussion and in 2005 the topic was 'Children Living Without Parental Care'. CLC made a submission and participated in the Discussion Day in September 2005; the experience was a very worthwhile one and facilitated the fostering of relationships with a range of national and international human rights NGOs and institutions.

We have developed our work on child rights indicators and have engaged with a range of actors in an effort to mainstream their use in the policy arena. In February 2006 we hosted a very successful workshop on child rights

indicators 'How do you measure whether government is effectively delivering on its children's rights obligations?' at an international multidisciplinary conference on Equality and Social Inclusion in Queen's University Belfast. We have promoted the development of child rights indicators within the context of the 10 year inter-departmental children's strategy and to this end we engaged in a number of discussions with OFMDFM, providing them with briefing papers and discussion documents. We will continue to promote the development of child rights indicators to monitor implementation of the Children's Strategy.

Our engagement with the Children's Service Planners on child rights indicators has borne fruit, with a decision by the four Children's Service Planners to develop a set of child rights indicators to measure the outcomes for their 2005-2008 plans. This work formed part of a larger training package on incorporating a child rights approach to Children's Service Planning for the 2005-2008 planning cycle which was largely centered in the Southern Area but which also included training across all the Children and Young People's Committees. The training programme was also successfully adapted and delivered to members of the 6th Sense Group, a group of young people with disabilities who are represented on the Children's Service Planners Disabled Children and Young People Working Group.

While our capacity, in the absence of a dedicated trainer, to provide general training on the CRC has been limited, we have nonetheless responded to a small number of requests for training on the Convention, including from QUB School of Social Work students and Fermanagh Shadow Youth Council.

In addition to child rights indicators, another potential tool for mainstreaming children's rights within both a legislative and policy context is the child impact assessment model. A number of countries have adapted the model to fit their particular context and clearly the development of this tool within Northern Ireland would have to be tailored to the specific equality monitoring context that obtains. Over the past year CLC has engaged in some exploratory discussions on this and will progress this work in the coming year.

## Bill of Rights

Despite the lack of tangible progress made by the two governments over the past year in establishing the Round Table Forum as committed to in the Joint Declaration of 2003, work has nonetheless continued apace on our efforts to secure the maximum protection of children and young people's rights through the Bill of Rights. CLC, with its partner Save the Children, commissioned research for the Children and Young People's Sector Bill of Rights Group into the how and why of protecting children and young people's rights in the Bill of Rights. This research examined the particular circumstances of children's lives in Northern Ireland and based on this identified the need for protection and promotion of their rights. It also explored the legal mechanisms best suited to realise these rights, drawing on international law and experience of other jurisdictions. The research, published in November 2005, has been very positively received.

CLC continues to co-convene the Children and Young People's Sector Bill of Rights Working Group and had led discussions by the sector with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Consortium, the Children's Commissioner, the political parties and the two governments. CLC has played an active role in the Human Rights Consortium; in June 2005 we chaired a public event in City Hall. We remain hopeful that the two governments will succeed in securing all party support for a round table forum on the Bill of Rights which would bring together the political parties and civic society to discuss and agree on what a Bill of Rights should contain.



## Children's Law Centre Limited (Incorporated by Guarantee) Financial information for the year end 2005/2006

### Statement of Financial Activities (Including Income & Expenditure Account) for the year ended 31 March 2006

	2006	2006	2006	2005
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£
<b>Incoming Resources</b>				
<b>Incoming resources from generated funds</b>				
Donation and grants	2,800	-	2,800	150
Investment income	9,570	-	9,570	7,389
<b>Incoming resources from charitable activities</b>				
Grants received	-	490,258	490,258	359,906
Other income	9,011	2,465	11,476	40,350
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>21,381</b>	<b>492,723</b>	<b>514,104</b>	<b>407,795</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>				
Charitable activities	12,219	329,497	341,716	309,966
Governance costs	3,680	93,882	97,562	100,738
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>15,899</b>	<b>423,379</b>	<b>439,278</b>	<b>410,704</b>
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year/net income/(expenditure) for the year</b>	<b>5,482</b>	<b>69,344</b>	<b>74,826</b>	<b>(2,909)</b>
Balance brought forward at start of year	125,464	130,508	255,972	258,881
<b>Balance carried forward at end of year</b>	<b>130,946</b>	<b>199,852</b>	<b>330,798</b>	<b>255,972</b>

The above Statement of Financial Activities includes all information as required to be disclosed by the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. The above amounts relate to the continuing operations of the Charity. The company has no other recognised gains or losses and therefore no separate statement of total recognised gains and losses has been presented. There is no difference between the net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year stated above and their historical cost equivalents.

### Balance Sheet at 31 March 2006

	2006	2005
	£	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>		
Tangible assets	18,251	17,329
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors and prepayments	30,120	34,993
Cash at bank and in hand	290,584	222,461
<b>Net current assets</b>	<b>312,547</b>	<b>238,643</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>330,798</b>	<b>255,972</b>
<b>Funds</b>		
Unrestricted funds	130,946	125,464
Restricted funds	199,852	130,508
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>330,798</b>	<b>255,972</b>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part VIII of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 relating to small companies.

**A complete set of Children's Law Centre audited accounts for 2005/2006 is available on request.**

	2006	2006	2006	2005
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£
<b>Incoming Resources</b>				
<b>Voluntary income:</b>				
<b>Donations and grants</b>				
Concordia	2,800	-	2,800	-
Donations	-	-	-	150
	<u>2,800</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,800</u>	<u>150</u>
<b>Investment Income</b>				
Bank interest receivable	9,570	-	9,570	7,389
	<u>9,570</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,570</u>	<u>7,389</u>
<b>Incoming resources from charitable activities:</b>				
<b>Grants received</b>				
DHSS and Public Safety	-	64,884	64,884	62,994
Health & Social Services Board	-	89,876	89,876	75,206
NHSSB	-	15,000	15,000	-
Save the Children Fund	-	35,500	35,000	25,000
Children in Need	-	26,879	26,879	34,626
Big Lottery Fund	-	24,462	24,462	100,571
Department of Education	-	10,000	10,000	10,000
Comic Relief	-	25,000	25,000	15,000
Community Foundation	-	1,000	1,000	6,500
Trocaire	-	-	-	2,500
Bill of Rights Booklet	-	-	-	1,075
Craigavon and Banbridge Trust	-	-	-	7,687
Atlantic Philanthropies	-	174,000	174,000	-
Centre for Global Education	-	10,000	10,000	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>476,601</u>	<u>476,601</u>	<u>341,159</u>
Change in deferred income	-	13,657	13,657	18,747
	<u>-</u>	<u>490,258</u>	<u>490,258</u>	<u>359,906</u>
<b>Other Income</b>				
Sales	8,998	-	8,998	17,030
Miscellaneous income	13	2,465	2,478	23,320
	<u>9,011</u>	<u>2,465</u>	<u>11,476</u>	<u>40,350</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21,381</b>	<b>492,723</b>	<b>514,104</b>	<b>407,795</b>