



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Education

Minutes of Proceedings

17 November 2021

Meeting Location: Teleconference

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Mr Chris Lyttle MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Pat Sheehan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Nicola Brogan MLA
Mr Robbie Butler MLA
Mrs Diane Dodds MLA
Mr Harry Harvey MLA
Mr Daniel McCrossan MLA
Mr Justin McNulty MLA
Mr Robin Newton MBE MLA

Ms Aoibhinn Treanor (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Mark McQuade (Assistant Clerk)
Mr Marcus Matthews (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Craig Mealey (Clerical Officer)



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Apologies:

The meeting commenced at 9:36am in public session.

1. Apologies

Apologies as above.

2. Chairperson's Business

2.1 Committee visit.

Committee members discussed a possible Committee visit on 1 December.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Committee Clerk would contact members in writing seeking their views.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of its meetings held on 16 November 2021, 17 November 2021, 18 November 2021, 19 November 2021 and 22 November 2021.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.



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5. Correspondence

5.1 The Committee noted an index of correspondence.

5.2 The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Education on childcare-related support led by the Department.

5.3 The Committee noted a response from the Minister of Education entitled contact tracing. This addressed Covid-19 contingency plans for schools as well as the Department's funding bids to improve school ventilation.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write again to the Minister of Education:

- Seeking a response to the Committee's queries on the substantive issue of contact tracing;
- Asking whether planned ventilation measures include air filtration and other devices in addition to the CO2 monitors ordered.

Mr Harvey noted that he believed that the current contact tracing system was working well.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Chief Medical Officer seeking updated data on the transmission of Covid-19 in schools.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Education Authority asking:

- What systems it has in place to promote CO2 monitors to schools and monitor the uptake of these;
- For the results of its survey of ventilation in schools.

Mr Sheehan joined the meeting at 9:48am.

Item 5.4 The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Education regarding the launch of a consultation on deferring school starting age.

Item 5.5 considered correspondence from the Department of Education providing an update on the Department of Education's response to the Department of Finance's Budget 2022-2025 Information Gathering exercise. The correspondence highlights a funding gap in the Education sector of £367.03m for 2022-23, with the gap increasing in subsequent years.



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Agreed: The Committee agreed to discuss this issue further at its next meeting.

5.6 The Committee noted correspondence from the Public Accounts Committee forwarding a letter from an individual noting concern about their child's experiences within the SEN system.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to address the systemic issues raised with DE officials in December's briefing on the SEN framework.

5.7 The Committee noted an invitation from NICCY to the launch of 'A Child's Rights Review of the Use of Restrictive Practices in Educational Settings in Northern Ireland'.

5.8 The Committee noted an invitation from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission to the launch of its 2021 Annual Human Rights Statement.

5.9 The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Education providing an update on the finalised arrangements for awarding Vocational Qualifications in Northern Ireland for the 2021/22 academic year.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to return to this correspondence at its next meeting.

6. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The Committee agreed a stakeholder list for a call for evidence on the Curriculum-CPR and AED Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed a stakeholder list for a call for evidence on the Period Products (Free Provision) Bill.

The Committee considered its forward work programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed its forward work programme.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:16am

The meeting resumed at 11:26am with Mr Lyttle, Mr Sheehan, Ms Brogan, Mr Butler, Mrs Dodds, Mr Harvey, Mr McCrossan, Mr McNulty and Mr Newton present.



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7. Integrated Education Bill – Formal Consideration of the Integrated Education Bill

The Committee considered the draft report on the Committee stage of the Integrated Education Bill.

Proposed Amendments

The Committee considered a proposed amendment to paragraph 8 of the Executive Summary of the draft report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the proposed amendment to paragraph 8 of the Executive Summary of the draft report.

The Committee considered a proposed amendment to paragraph 10 of the Executive Summary of the draft report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the proposed amendment to paragraph 10 of the Executive Summary of the draft report.

The Committee considered a proposed amendment to paragraph 18 of the draft report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the proposed amendment to paragraph 18 of the draft report.

The Committee considered a proposed amendment to paragraph 37 of the draft report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the proposed amendment to paragraph 37 of the draft report.

The Committee considered a proposed amendment to paragraph 60 of the draft report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the proposed amendment to paragraph 60 of the draft report.

The Committee considered the Title Page, Table of Contents Page, Committee Membership and Powers Page, and Abbreviations Page as drafted.



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Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Title Page, Table of Contents Page, Committee Membership and Powers Page, and Abbreviations Page.

The Committee considered the Executive summary section of the report (paragraphs 1 to 130) as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Executive Summary section of the report as amended.

The Committee considered the Introduction section of the report (paragraphs 1 to 35) as drafted

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Introduction section of the report as amended.

The Committee considered the Consideration of the Bill section of the report (paragraphs 36 to 48) as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed Consideration of the Bill section of the report as amended.

The Committee considered the Clause by Clause Scrutiny section of the Bill section of the report (paragraphs 49 to 71) as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Clause by Clause Scrutiny section of the report as amended.

The Committee considered the Appendices section of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content that the Appendices be included in the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Report on the Integrated Education Bill to be published and issued to all MLAs.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Chairperson to approve the Minutes of Proceedings of this meeting for inclusion in the report. They would then be replaced by the final version of the Minutes of Proceedings once agreed by the Committee at the next meeting.



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Agreed: The Committee agreed that an electronic copy of the Bill report should be sent to all organisations and individuals who provided evidence to the Committee on the Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the minutes of its meeting held on 23 November 2021.

8. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.

9. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next formal Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday 1 December 2021 by video conference at 9:30am.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:25pm.

Chris Lyttle MLA

**Chairperson, Committee for Education
1 December 2021**