



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Education

Minutes of Proceedings

6 October 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 Craig Mealey (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Emma Magee (Clerical Officer)



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Apologies: None

The meeting commenced at 9:31am in public session.

1. Apologies

No apologies were received.

2. Chairperson's Business

2.1 Assembly Research briefings on Adolescent Career Aspirations: Challenges and Opportunities, and the Role of Sleep in Adolescent Health and Wellbeing

The Committee noted a record of an informal briefing on Adolescent Career Aspirations: Challenges and Opportunities, and the Role of Sleep in Adolescent Health and Wellbeing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to add the report to the Education Committee Youth Engagement Report: "Life and Learning in Lockdown".

2.2 Chairpersons' Liaison Group Meeting

The Committee noted correspondence from the Chairpersons' Liaison Group on the need for Committees to prioritise legislation.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of its meeting held on 29 September 2021.



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4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. 'A Fair Start' Report - Oral Briefing by the Department of Education and Members of the Expert Panel on Educational Underachievement

The Committee noted the Fair Start Report and Action Plan.

The following witnesses joined the meeting by video conference at 9:36am:

Dr Noel Purdy, Director of Centre for Research in Educational Underachievement, Stranmillis University College

Ms Joyce Logue, Principal, Longtower Primary School Derry/Londonderry, Expert Panel on Underachievement

Ms Mary Montgomery, Principal, Belfast Boys' Model School, Expert Panel on Underachievement

Ms Kathleen O'Hare, Retired Principal, Hazelwood Integrated College and former Principal of St Cecilia's College, Expert Panel on Underachievement

Mr Jackie Redpath, Chief Executive, Greater Shankill Partnership, Expert Panel on Underachievement

Ms Alison Chambers, Director of Promoting Collaboration and Tackling Disadvantage, Department of Education

Mr Dale Heaney, Head of Tackling Educational Disadvantage Team, Department of Education

The witnesses briefed the Committee on the Fair Start report.

The briefing was covered by Hansard.

This was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for the briefing.



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Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Executive Office to support the project and:

- Indicating that the Committee believes that funding needs be on a multi-year basis; and
- Endorsing the recommendation that the action plan is monitored by a committee chaired by First Minister and Deputy First Minister and recommending that the envisaged twice yearly reporting should be to the Assembly via ministerial statement.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Minister of Education commending the report and asking:

- That the report should remain a priority for the Department;
- The Department to provide the committee with regular updates on progress against the action plan;
- That the expert panel continues to be involved with the implementation of the report; and
- That the implementation should be reported to the Assembly by twice yearly Ministerial statement.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to issue a press release:

- Commending the report;
- Congratulating the panel on its robust work;
- Pledging to do its part to ensure this robust work is carried forward; and
- Stating that it believes that the action plan should be coupled with a long-term (multi-year) funding commitment from the Executive.

6. Integrated Education Bill - Oral Briefing by Bill Sponsor, Kellie Armstrong MLA

The following witness joined the meeting by video conference at 11:11am.

Ms Kellie Armstrong, MLA - Strangford, Northern Ireland Assembly

Ms Fiona McAteer, Research Officer, Alliance Party



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The witnesses briefed the Committee on the Integrated Education Bill.

The briefing was covered by Hansard.

This was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for the briefing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Bills sponsor outlining Committee Members' key areas for clarification on the Bill.

7. Integrated Education Bill - Oral Briefing by the Council for Integrated Education Northern Ireland (NICIE)

The Committee noted a briefing paper from the Council for Integrated Education Northern Ireland

The following witnesses joined the meeting by video conference at 12:13am:

Mrs Roisin Marshall, Chief Executive Officer, Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

Ms Maeve Marnell, Chair, Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

Ms Lorna McAlpine, Senior Development Officer, Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

Mr Sean Pettis, Senior Development Officer, Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

The witnesses briefed the Committee on the Integrated Education Bill.

Ms McAlpine made a declaration of interest that she is an Alliance party councillor.

The briefing was covered by Hansard.

This was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for the briefing.



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8. Correspondence

8.1 The Committee noted an index of correspondence.

8.2 The Committee noted a response from the Department of Education to the Committee's request for an oral briefing on the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI).

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write again to the Department of Education on this matter.

8.3 The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Procedures about its Inquiry into Legislative Consent Motions.

8.4 The Committee noted copies of the Education (Curriculum) (CPR and AED) Bill.

8.5 The Committee noted copies of the Explanatory and Financial Memorandum for the Education (Curriculum) (CPR and AED) Bill.

8.6 The Committee noted a response from CCEA providing further information on assessment arrangements for CCEA's GCSE Science qualifications in 2021-22.

8.7 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from Councillor Kate Nicholl, Lord Mayor of Belfast to the Minister of Education regarding concerns around the lack of structured education provision for young refugee and asylum seekers.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Education and Department for the Economy seeking information on how this could be addressed in 14-19 Strategy and to reply to the Lord Mayor referencing the Committee's interface with this issue in its youth engagement work.

8.8 The Committee noted the Department of Education Investing Activity Report for September 2021.

8.9 The Committee noted correspondence from ShieldUs regarding concerns about the effect of current covid-19 guidelines for schools on the clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV).

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Committee for Health.



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Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the official report of the oral briefing with the Minister for Education and Chief Medical Officer to ShieldUs.

9. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered its forward work programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed its forward work programme.

10. Any Other Business

No Other Business was discussed.

11. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next formal Committee meeting will be held on Thursday 7 October 2021 by video conference at 9:00am.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:40pm.

Chris Lyttle MLA

**Chairperson, Committee for Education
13 October 2021**