



Department of  
**Education**

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Your Ref: 2502

5 February 2016

Dear Peter

### **ADDRESSING BULLYING IN SCHOOLS BILL**

We acknowledge receipt of your letter of 5 February. Officials are preparing a full response and this will be provided before 19 February, as requested.

In the interim, the Committee have asked to see copies of the Department's current guidance in relation to pastoral care in schools; and the well-being and safeguarding of pupils. There are two documents relevant to this area, links are provided below.

#### **Pastoral Care in Schools – Child Protection**

<https://www.deni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/Pastoral%20Care%20in%20schools%20child%20protection.pdf>

We would draw your attention to the Introduction and summary of advice (**pages 1-5**) which set out what constitutes physical or emotional abuse, the integration expected between pastoral care and child protection within schools and the overarching principle that the welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration.

Of further interest will be the recommendations on procedures to be followed in responding to reports of abuse and recommendations on the record keeping schools should undertake in all such cases (**pages 16-18**).

### **Pastoral Care in Schools – Promoting Positive Behaviour**

<https://www.deni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/pastoral%20care%20in%20schools.pdf>

This document again emphasises the integration which should exist between a school's policies on promoting good behaviour, managing challenging pupil behaviours in the classroom and wider school, tackling bullying and providing appropriate support for any pupil suffering emotional distress. **Paragraphs 97-145** are considered particularly pertinent.

It will be necessary to update both these documents in due course to ensure they reflect the changes introduced by the Addressing Bullying in Schools Bill; and that their recommendations for best practice reflect the Bill's supporting guidance and the Executive's e-Safety strategy, currently being developed by the SBNI.

Yours sincerely

*Russell*

**RUSSELL WELSH**  
**Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer**