



Northern Ireland  
Assembly  
Committee for Education  
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS  
WEDNESDAY 24 October 2012  
THE SENATE CHAMBER

**Present:**

Mervyn Storey MLA (Chairperson)  
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Michaela Boyle MLA  
Jonathan Craig MLA  
Jo-Anne Dobson MLA  
Chris Hazzard MLA  
Trevor Lunn MLA  
Michelle McIlveen MLA  
Sean Rogers MLA  
Pat Sheehan MLA

**In Attendance:**

Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)  
Sheila Mawhinney (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Paula Best (Clerical Supervisor)  
Sharon Young (Clerical Officer)  
Ursula Savage (Bursary Student)

**Apologies:**

Brenda Hale MLA

*The meeting commenced in public session at 10.02am.*

**1. Apologies**

Apologies are detailed above.

**2. Chairperson's Business**

- 2.1. The Chairperson advised Members that he had met with Richard Hanna, the interim Chief Executive of CCEA, to discuss a number of relevant issues.
- 2.2. The Chairperson referred Members to the recent Ministerial statement on the North South Ministerial Council in Education Sectoral format held in Armagh on 17 October 2012. The statement made reference to a study on cross-border co-operation, carried out by the Department of Education and the Department of Education and Skills in the Republic of Ireland.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Education to obtain a copy of the report on the study.

- 2.3. The Chairperson reminded Members that pupils from Carrickfergus College were meeting with the Deputy Chairperson in Parliament Buildings later that afternoon.

### **3. Draft Minutes of 17 October 2012**

**Agreed:** The draft minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2012 were agreed by the Committee.

### **4. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from last week's meeting.

*Michaela Boyle joined the meeting at 10.06am.*

### **5. The Education (Levels of Progression for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2012**

The Committee noted assurances from the Department in respect of the reduction in the moderation sample sizes for smaller schools and small class sizes.

*Officials joined the meeting at 10.11am.*

Mrs Katrina Godfrey, Director of Planning & Performance Management; Mr David Hughes, Director of Curriculum, Qualifications and Standards; Mr Carl Savage, Assessment and Qualifications Team; and Ms Ruth Kennedy, Business Manager, Curriculum Assessment and Reporting, CCEA, briefed the Committee on the proposed Statutory Rule, The Education (Levels of Progression for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2012.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The Committee noted the responses and deferred further consideration of the proposed Statutory Rule until the conclusion of the following briefing session.

### **6. Briefing on Computer-Based Assessment (NINA and NILA)**

*Officials remained at the meeting for the briefing on Computer-Based Assessment.*

The officials briefed the Committee on the technical and other issues currently being experienced by some users of the computer-based assessment programmes for numeracy (NINA) and literacy (NILA), and on the suitability of these assessments for deaf children.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The Committee noted related tabled correspondence from INTO and the North Down Primary Principals Group.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking contact details for schools that have: successfully completed the NILAs and NINAs; are experiencing difficulties with the NILAs and NINAs and those which, owing to technical or other issues, have been unable to commence the assessments.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to request further information on the planned Education and Training Inspectorate's evaluation of the current and previous computer-based assessment programmes prescribed by the Department.

The Committee also considered the procurement arrangements associated with the NILAs and NINAs.

*Michaela Boyle left the meeting at 11.05am.*

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking the relevant risk register and risk analyses. The Committee also agreed to seek access to the relevant Gateway Review documentation.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to request an update on the outcome of CCEA's planned meeting with representatives of the National Deaf Children's Society and other stakeholder groups.

*Michelle McIlveen left the meeting at 11.52am.*

*The officials left the meeting at 11.52am.*

**Agreed:** In order to further inform the Committee's first-hand knowledge of this issue, Members agreed to arrange a visit to a local primary school to review its experience of the computer-based assessments.

*Michelle McIlveen rejoined the meeting at 11.55am.*

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Western Education and Library Board for an update on C2K's provision of IT hardware and the level of broadband connectivity in schools.

**Agreed:** The Committee further agreed to write to: the primary schools identified by the Department (above); those primary schools which attended the Committee's recent stakeholder event on Area Planning; and relevant stakeholders groups to ascertain their experience of NILAs and NINAs.

## **7. The Education (Levels of Progression for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2012**

The Committee agreed to return to agenda item 5.

The Committee noted an assurance from officials that primary schools were to be exempt from moderation arrangements for the Levels of Progression for 2012-13.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to obtain written confirmation of the above assurance.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that subject to written confirmation of the above, it was content for the Department to make the Statutory Rule.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to schedule further scrutiny of the outworking of the Levels of Progression assessments later in 2013.

## **8. Briefing from RalSe on School Inspection**

The Committee agreed to omit an oral briefing on the Assembly Research paper on School Inspection in Northern Ireland and in other jurisdictions.

## **9. Briefing from the Education and Training Inspectorate on the Chief Inspector's Report 2010-2012**

*Officials joined the meeting at 12.06pm.*

Ms Noelle Buick, Chief Inspector; together with Ms Faustina Graham and Mr Paul McAlister, both Assistant Chief Inspectors; and Mr John Anderson, Managing Inspector, briefed the Committee on the Chief Inspector's Report 2010-2012.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

*Chris Hazzard left the meeting at 12.28pm.*

*Michelle McIlveen left the meeting at 12.48pm.*

*Danny Kinahan left the meeting at 1.00pm.*

*Trevor Lunn left the meeting at 1.09pm.*

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to request further information on the role of District Inspectors. The Committee also requested sight of the ETI Report on Specialist Schools.

*Officials left the meeting at 1.21pm.*

## **10. Correspondence**

**10.1.** The Committee noted an invitation from the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum to the Launch and Awards Ceremony, 'Everybody is Somebody' – 20 November 2012.

**10.2.** The Committee noted events which took place in Northern Ireland during Maths Week 2012.

**10.3.** Members noted an invitation from the African and Caribbean Support Organisation of Northern Ireland (ACSONI) to a Talk Show event entitled, "Education and Development: what are the challenges and experiences?"

**10.4.** The Committee noted correspondence from a concerned parent regarding GCSE resit issues.

- 10.5.** The Committee considered correspondence from the Peace and Reconciliation Group, requesting an opportunity to brief the Committee on the outcome of a sixth-form after-schools project on oral history.
- 10.6.** Members noted correspondence from a concerned parent regarding a statement of Special Educational Needs.
- 10.7.** Members noted a response to Committee concerns that mental health issues are not being specifically included within the Revised Curriculum.
- 10.8.** The Committee noted an update from the Department on corrective measures undertaken following errors in CCEA Mathematics papers in 2011.
- 10.9.** The Committee considered correspondence from the Federation of Passenger Transport concerning school transport issues.  
**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department, and to the Driver and Vehicle Agency, for comment on the correspondence and on the related policy issues.
- 10.10.** The Committee noted a response from the Department on the membership of the Expert Panel which is to carry out the Review of GCSEs and A Levels.
- 10.11.** The Committee considered correspondence from the Department on the establishment of Sectoral Support Bodies.  
**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking clarity on sectoral support for voluntary grammar schools and the provision of that support by the Governing Bodies Association.  
**Agreed:** The Committee also agreed to write to Reverend Ian Ellis to arrange a meeting with the Working Group for the Controlled Schools' Sectoral Support Body.
- 10.12.** Members considered correspondence from the Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety on its Review of Health Inequalities  
**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department for response.
- 10.13.** The Committee noted a response from the Minister to correspondence from Trevor Lunn MLA concerning the number of surplus places in primary schools.
- 10.14.** The Committee noted a response from the Minister on the Area Planning consultation.

- 10.15.** The Committee noted an invitation from the University of Ulster to a knowledge exchange seminar entitled, 'Delivering Shared Education'.on 1 November 2012.

The Committee also noted a number of Department of Education News Releases which were previously emailed to Members.

## **11. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee discussed its draft Forward Work Programme, and noted informal stakeholder events on Underachievement, to be held on 24 October 2012, and on Sport in Schools, scheduled for 7 November 2012.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing from Professor Tony Gallagher, its Special Adviser on Viability Audits and Area Planning, on 7 November 2012. The Committee also agreed to postpone a briefing scheduled for the same date on Departmental PEDU Action Plans at the Department's request.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to a number of stakeholders, inviting them to an informal briefing event on the draft Priorities for Youth policy.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed an amended Forward Work Programme.

## **12. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

## **13. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 7 November 2012 at 10.00am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 1.26pm.*

Mervyn Storey  
Chairperson, Committee for Education  
7 November 2012