



Northern Ireland
Assembly
Committee for Education
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY 16 January 2013
Room 21

Present:

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

In Attendance:

Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Sharon Young (Clerical Officer)
Kerry Richards (Clerical Officer)
Ursula Savage (Bursary Student)

Apologies:

The meeting commenced in open session at 10.01am.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

Jonathan Craig joined the meeting at 10.03am.

Brenda Hale joined the meeting at 10.03am.

Michaela Boyle joined the meeting at 10.06am.

2. Chairperson's Business

- 2.1.** The Chairperson updated Members on his attendance at the BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition (BTYSTE) in the RDS.

Agreed: The Committee agreed a press release congratulating the local schools that were special award or category winners.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the successful schools congratulating them on their success.

Agreed: The Committee also agreed to organise an event highlighting the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects and to invite along the schools that participated in the BTYSTE.

- 2.2. The Chairperson noted a recent update provided during OFMDFM questions on 14 January 2013 relating to the Signature Project (announced 10 October 2012) to promote literacy and numeracy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek a timeline for the recruitment of teachers and funding of nurture units as part of the Signature Project.

Jonathan Craig left the meeting at 10.08am.

3. Draft Minutes of 9 January 2013

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2013 were agreed by the Committee subject to a minor correction.

4. Matters Arising

There were a number of matters arising from last week's meeting.

- 4.1. The Committee noted an additional paper from the Transferor Representatives' Council regarding the Education Bill and nomination rights in amalgamated controlled schools.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the Department for comment on the specific issue raised.

- 4.2. The Committee noted a submission from the Association of Controlled Grammar Schools to the Committee's call for evidence to the Education Bill.

- 4.3. **Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Committee for OFMDFM seeking its views on the relevant clauses of the Education Bill.

5. Ministerial Briefing on the Early Years Framework

The briefing commenced at 10.12am.

The Minister for Education Mr John O'Dowd MLA; Miss Linda Wilson, Director of Families and Communities, DE; and Mrs Cathy Galway, Head of Early Years 2 Team, DE briefed the Committee on the Early Years Framework.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department asking for additional information on the procedures and appeals process for parents with children at or above the school starting age who wish to defer their child's commencement of formal primary education.

Jonathan Craig re-joined the meeting at 10.36am.

Jo-Anne Dobson left the meeting at 11.02am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to commission research from the Assembly Research and Information Service which would update previous work on Early Years provision and include comparisons with the provision in other jurisdictions.

The briefing ended at 11.31am.

6. Briefing from the Catholic Heads Association on the Committee Stage of the Education Bill

The briefing commenced at 11.34am.

Ms Carol McCann, principal of St Dominic's Grammar School, Belfast and Chairperson, Catholic Heads Association; Mr Dermot Mullan, principal of Our Lady and St. Patrick's College, Knock and Mr David Lambon, principal of St Malachy's College, Belfast presented the Catholic Heads Association submission to the call for evidence for the Committee Stage of the Education Bill

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask for additional information on the following:

- the TUPE arrangements for teachers with differing terms and conditions in voluntary grammar schools;
- clarification on who is to take responsibility for the drawing-up of teachers' terms and conditions in voluntary grammar schools following passage of the Bill;
- clarification on the current submitting authority in voluntary grammar schools;
- details of the provisions in the Bill which require employment schemes and schemes of management to be compatible;
- details of the provisions within the Bill for the above schemes to be compatible with governance arrangements in schools; and
- a response to the suggestion that the Bill should require CCEA to be a non-profit making organisation.

Brenda Hale left the meeting at 11.49am.

Jo-Anne Dobson re-joined the meeting at 12.06pm.

The briefing ended at 12.55pm.

7. Departmental response on the Education Bill

The briefing commenced at 12.55pm.

Mr Chris Stewart, Director of Equality and All-Ireland Division, DE provided clarification on a number of issues raised during the evidence session.

The briefing ended at 1.05pm.

Pat Sheehan left the meeting at 1.06am.

8. Written Briefing on Subordinate Legislation 2012/444: The Education (Levels of Progression for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3) Order (NI) 2012

The Committee considered the above Statutory Rule.

The question put and agreed:

“The Committee for Education has considered the Statutory Rule 2012/444: The Education (Levels of Progression for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3) Order (NI) 2012 and has no objection to the Rule.”

9. Correspondence

- 9.1.** The Committee noted a response from the Department of Education regarding Kilbride Central Primary School’s funding issues.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department and the North Eastern Education and Library Board asking for clarity in respect of the funding policy where a school is experiencing a short term variation in its enrolment level.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to re-consider this correspondence when it receives the report from the Independent Review Panel on the Common Funding Scheme.

- 9.2.** The Committee noted a response from the Department of Education regarding issues raised by Allergy NI.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to re-consider this correspondence when the Department’s Food in Schools policy is published.

- 9.3.** The Committee noted correspondence from Lisburn City Council and the North Eastern Education and Library Board regarding Priorities for Youth.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to re-consider this correspondence when the Department briefs on the feedback to the Priorities for Youth consultation.

- 9.4.** The Committee noted a response from the Department of Education regarding the Area Planning timetable.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking further detail on the timetable. Members also agreed that they believed that the Department should conclude its work on the post-primary Area Plans before commencement of the consultation on the primary Area Plans.

- 9.5.** The Committee noted an invitation to schools from the Controlled Schools Support Council to attend information sessions.

- 9.6.** The Committee noted an invitation from Young Enterprise NI to attend a student Trade Fair.

- 9.7.** The Committee noted a response from the Department of Education regarding a Stranmillis University College research proposal into ICT in schools at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3.

- 9.8.** The Committee noted correspondence from McDonalds Restaurants regarding the launch of their Happy Readers Campaign.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to McDonalds Restaurants for further information on the Happy Readers Campaign.

Agreed: The Committee also agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department to determine if it is to support the Happy Readers Campaign.

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

10. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The Committee agreed a list of invitees to the Committee's A-Level event scheduled for 20 March 2012. Members also agreed the format of the event.

11. AOB

Agreed: The Committee agreed to make arrangements with the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development to jointly attend the Northern Ireland Assembly Legislative Trust's Effective Questioning and Scrutiny Workshop.

12. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 23 January 2013 at 9:30am in Room 21, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 1.17pm.

Mervyn Storey
Chairperson, Committee for Education
23 January 2013