



Northern Ireland  
Assembly  
Committee for Education  
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS  
WEDNESDAY 15 May 2013  
The SENATE CHAMBER

**Present:**

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

**In Attendance:**

Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)  
Christopher McNickle (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Sharon McGurk (Clerical Supervisor)  
Sharon Young (Clerical Officer)  
Ursula Savage (Bursary Student)

**Apologies:**

Michaela Boyle MLA  
Brenda Hale MLA  
Trevor Lunn MLA

*The meeting commenced in public session at 10.04 am.*

**1. Apologies**

Apologies are detailed above.

**2. Chairperson's Business**

2.1. The Chairperson expressed the Committee's sadness following the unexpected death of a member of Michaela Boyle's immediate family.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to Michaela to express its sympathies.

2.2. The Chairperson noted recent reports of the tragic death of a pupil from Whiteabbey Primary School.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write expressing its sympathies to the principal of Whiteabbey Primary School.

*Pat Sheehan joined the meeting at 10.06am.*

2.3. The Committee noted the recent announcement by the First Minister and deputy First Minister in respect of the community relations strategy entitled "Together: Building a United Community" which included plans for work placements for young people; summer school places; and shared education campuses.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Education Minister seeking details on the related timescales; costs; and budgets for these proposals.

### 3. Draft minutes of 8 May 2013

**Agreed:** The draft minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2013 were agreed by the Committee.

*Danny Kinahan joined the meeting at 10.10am.*

*Jonathan Craig joined the meeting at 10.12am.*

## 4. Matters Arising

4.1. The Committee considered its visit on 8 May 2013 to the Northern Ireland Science Park.

Members strongly felt that the promotion of STEM in schools and the apparent disconnect between the education system and the needs of industry required further scrutiny.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to give consideration to joint work with the Committee for Employment and Learning and the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure to highlight the importance of improving the popularity of, and access to, STEM subjects through e.g. the arts.

**Agreed:** The Committee further agreed to respond to the Committee for Employment and Learning's Inquiry into Careers Education, Advice Information and Guidance highlighting its concerns in respect of STEM choices at key educational transition points.

4.2. The Committee considered its response to the Committee for Finance and Personnel's request for feedback on the Northern Ireland Audit Office's report on the 2008-11 Efficiency Delivery Plans.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to send its response to the Committee for Finance and Personnel.

## 5. Briefing from the Ministerial Advisory Group

*Witnesses joined the meeting at 10.28 am.*

Professor Paul Connolly, Chairperson of the Ministerial Advisory Group and P.J. O'Grady, Member of the Ministerial Advisory Group briefed the Committee on the Ministerial Advisory Group's report on Advancing Shared Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

*Jonathan Craig left the meeting at 10.44am.*

*Michelle McIlveen left the meeting at 11.33am.*

*Jo-Anne Dobson left the meeting at 12.07pm.*

*Witnesses left the meeting at 12.20pm.*

*Pat Sheehan left the meeting at 12.21pm*

*The Committee lost its decision-making quorum at 12.21pm and in accordance with Standing Order 49(5) the Committee continued to receive evidence with a quorum of four Members.*

## 6. Briefing from the Department on the development of PEDU Action Plans

*Officials joined the meeting at 12.22pm*

Katrina Godfrey, Director of Planning and Performance Management; Alan McMullan, deputy Head of Schools Access Team; and La'verne Montgomery, Director of Education Workforce Development briefed the Committee on the Department's progress in developing the PEDU Action Plans.

*Jo-Anne Dobson re-joined the meeting at 12.26pm, the Committee regained its decision-making quorum at this time.*

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek sight of the Stage 2 PEDU Action Plans and to also seek an update on its progress in implementing the findings of the Stage 1 PEDU report.

*Officials left the meeting at 1.06pm.*

## 7. Departmental Briefing on SL1: The Statistics and Registration Services Act 2007 (Disclosure of Pupil Information) Regulations (NI) 2013

*Officials joined the meeting at 1.06pm.*

Katrina Godfrey, Director of Planning and Performance Management and Ivor Graham, Statistics and Research Team briefed the Committee on the SL1.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Committee for Finance and Personnel to confirm that, subject to further consideration by the Committee for Finance and Personnel, it was content for the proposed statutory rule to be made.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department regarding Child Protection Information records and the guidance to schools regarding the retention period for these kinds of records.

*Officials left the meeting at 1.11pm.*

## 8. Correspondence

8.1. The Committee noted correspondence from Dominic Bradley MLA regarding the closure of St James' Primary School Mullachbreac, Co. Armagh.

8.2. The Committee considered correspondence from the National Deaf Children's Society regarding the Special Educational Needs Review and the SEN Bill.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department for comment.

8.3. The Committee considered correspondence from Victoria Primary School regarding its school council and a future visit to Parliament Buildings.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to refer Victoria Primary School to the Committee's inquiry on School Councils and forward the correspondence to Assembly Outreach.

8.4. The Committee considered correspondence from Donacloney Primary School regarding the recent decision to turn down Development Proposal No. 279.

The Committee noted that the Minister had declined to meet with a Committee Member to discuss the Development Proposal.

8.5. The Committee considered a response from the Department regarding a briefing from the Northern Ireland Schools and Colleges Careers Association (NISCA) on the Committee for Employment and Learning's Inquiry into Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward the response to the Committee for Employment and Learning.

8.6. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure regarding a Replay Theatre Event on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

8.7. The Committee considered correspondence from the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education regarding: the shortfall of provision in integrated pre-school settings and setting out revised arrangements for transformation to integrated status.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education and invite them to brief the Committee on the issue of provision in integrated pre-school settings and on the revised arrangements for transformation.

8.8. The Committee considered correspondence from the Westminster Youth Parliament regarding its inquiry on the role of the education system and the National Curriculum in equipping young people with skills for life.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Westminster Youth Parliament advising on the Committee for Employment and Learning's inquiry into Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance.

8.9. The Committee noted a response from the Department regarding correspondence from the Committee for Employment and Learning in respect of the Entitlement Framework budget.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward the response to the Committee for Employment and Learning.

8.10. The Committee noted correspondence from the South Eastern Regional College regarding its pilot scheme to map deprivation among its students.

8.11. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department regarding teacher training and formal coaching qualifications.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to its Sport in Schools stakeholders and to the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure for information.

8.12. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department regarding payments to non-teaching staff following the establishment of the Education and Skills Authority.

8.13. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department regarding a new build for Strabane Academy; the Development Proposal for Orchard County Primary School; and surplus school places.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department regarding the discrepancy between the Department's and the Education and Library Boards' figures in respect of surplus school places.

## **9. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee agreed that it was content with the Forward Work Programme as drafted.

The Committee considered a memo setting out the invitees to the Committee's informal stakeholder briefing event on primary school Area Planning.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to issue invitations to the informal briefing event as set out in the memo.

The Committee noted that it was to meeting informally with the Friends of Clontifleece Primary School on 22 May 2013 and that it was also to meet informally with representatives of Orangefield High School on 4 June 2013.

## **10. Any Other Business**

The Committee considered press reports relating to the impact which the G8 Summit may have on the scheduling of school examinations.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek information on its engagement with stakeholders on this issue and on its contingency plans or relevant guidance for schools in relation to the scheduling of examinations during the G8 Summit.

## **11. Date, time and place of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 22 May 2013 at 10:00 am in the the Senate Chamber

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 1.15pm.*

**Mervyn Storey**  
**Chairperson, Committee for Education**  
**22 May 2013**