



Northern Ireland  
Assembly  
Committee for Education  
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS  
WEDNESDAY 16 MARCH 2016  
SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

**Present:**

Peter Weir MLA (Chairperson)  
Sandra Overend MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Jonathan Craig MLA  
Pat Sheehan MLA

**In Attendance:**

Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)  
Paul Stitt (Assistant Clerk)  
Paula Best (Clerical Supervisor)  
Kevin Marks (Clerical Officer)

**Apologies:**

Dolores Kelly MLA  
Danny Kennedy MLA  
Robin Newton MLA  
Nelson McCausland MLA  
Maeve McLaughlin MLA

*The meeting commenced in public session at 10:19am. In the absence of a decision-making quorum, proceedings continued in line with Standing Order 49(5).*

**1. Apologies**

Apologies are recorded above.

**2. Chairperson's Business**

**2.1 Ministerial written statement**

The Chairperson drew Members' attention to a recent Ministerial written statement regarding the new build programme in the primary school sector.

*The order of agenda items was altered.*

**3. Special Schools Funding – Assembly Research**

A representative from Assembly Research Services joined the meeting at 10:22am.

Caroline Perry, Assembly Research Services briefed the Committee on her paper entitled: Special Schools Funding.

A question and answer session followed the briefing.

The representative from Assembly Research Services left the meeting at 10:32am.

#### **4. Pre-school provision in Special Schools – Education Authority**

*The witnesses joined the meeting at 10:32am.*

Gavin Boyd, Interim Chief Executive, Education Authority; and Claire Mangan, Director of Children's and Young People's Services, Education Authority briefed the Committee in respect of pre-school provision in Special Schools.

The Committee considered:

- a briefing paper tabled by the Education Authority;
- related correspondence provided by the Education Authority and the Department; and
- correspondence from Arvalee Special School, Omagh regarding pre-school provision in Special Schools.

A question and answer session followed the briefing.

The witnesses indicated that further information would be provided in respect of transport costs and travelling times.

*The witnesses left the meeting at 11:42am.*

*Proceedings were suspended at 11:43am.*

*Proceedings resumed at 11:47am with the following Members: Peter Weir, Jonathan Craig, Sandra Overend and Pat Sheehan.*

#### **5. Correspondence**

**5.1** The Committee considered an index of incoming correspondence.

**5.2** The Committee considered the latest EU Matters Newsletter provided by the Assembly European Affairs Manager.

**5.3** The Committee considered a revised response from the Department of Education regarding the transferability of A Levels and the uptake of applied A-levels.

**5.4** The Committee considered a response from the Department of Education regarding the West Belfast Partnership Board.

**5.5** The Committee considered a copy of correspondence from Moneynick and Duneane Primary Schools to the Minister regarding a bid for funding for a joint campus.

**5.6** The Committee considered a response from the Department of Education to Committee queries regarding injuries in school sports.

**5.7** The Committee considered a response from the Education Authority to Committee queries regarding injuries in school sports.

**5.8** The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Education regarding the repeal of Ofqual's functions to regulate professional and technical (vocational) qualifications in Northern Ireland.

**5.9** The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Education advising of a call for capital projects in the Youth sector.

**5.10** The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Education indicating the launch of the Teacher Learning Professional Strategy.

**5.11** The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Education regarding the wording in the statutory rule entitled: The Complaints Tribunal (Curriculum and Related Matters) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016.

**5.12** The Committee considered a response from the Department of Education to Committee queries regarding the Early Years Pathway Fund.

**5.13** The Committee considered a response from the Department of Education to Committee queries regarding the Careers Strategy. DE advised that it had yet to decide whether the e-portfolio would be used to record pupils' non-academic attainment.

**5.14** The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Education confirming that it will have responsibility in the next mandate for the oversight of co-operation between departments in supporting of the well-being of children.

**5.15** The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Education providing an update on the Early Intervention Transformation Programme.

**5.16** The Committee considered a response from the Department of Education to Committee queries regarding the promotion of STEM in schools.

**5.17** The Committee considered a response from the Department of Education to Committee queries regarding school surpluses and deficits.

**5.18** The Committee considered correspondence from a concerned individual highlighting issues relating to the study of modern languages in schools.

## **6. Any Other Business**

The Chairperson expressed his thanks to all Committee Members for their contribution to the work of the Committee during the mandate.

The Chairperson also expressed his thanks to the Clerk and his staff for the support provided to Members in the discharge of their Committee duties.

The Chairperson informed Members that the date of the first meeting of the successor Committee will be advised in the new mandate.

*The meeting was adjourned at 11:49am.*

***Minutes agreed by correspondence 18 March 2016***