

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Report on the Committee's study visit to Millburn Primary School, Coleraine

Wednesday 5 March 2014

On Wednesday 5 March 2014, the Public Accounts Committee visited Millburn Primary School, Coleraine. The visit was part of the Committee's inquiry into Improving Pupil Attendance.



Millburn Primary School first opened its doors in 1956 and is situated in the heart of Coleraine's Millburn Estate.

As of 2013 the school is attended by 375 pupils and has 14 mainstream classes. The Principal, Mr John Platt, leads a staff of more than 40 members.

Millburn Primary School was cited in the Northern Ireland Audit Office's report on this issue as one of a number of schools that exhibited good practice in how it addressed the issue of persistent absenteeism. The Committee therefore felt it important to visit the school to hear first-hand how the Principal and staff have tackled this issue. Equally importantly, the Committee's Members wanted to hear from the children of the school, to find out why they enjoy school and what makes school important to them.



The need to change attitudes, break down barriers and to remind parents of the importance of punctuality and attendance through parental and community engagement was identified as vital by the Audit Office, in its report. This was evident from the discussions that Members had during the visit.

The Public Accounts Committee will continue its inquiry into improving pupil attendance and will take into account the information received during the visit. This and the evidence collected from the Audit Office and witnesses who attended the Committee will inform the production of the report at the conclusion of this inquiry. It is expected that the report will be published in June 2014.

The PAC thanks the Principal and staff of Millburn for hosting the visit and informing the inquiry. Members also thank those pupils who took time out of their school day to share their very positive thoughts and experiences of life at Millburn Primary School.