



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Education

Minutes of Proceedings

14 May 2025

Meeting Location: Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present:

Mr Nick Mathison MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Pat Sheehan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Danny Baker MLA
Mr David Brooks MLA
Mrs Michelle Guy MLA
Mrs Cathy Mason MLA
Mr Peter Martin MLA

Ms Aoibhinn Treanor (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Mark McQuade (Assistant Clerk)
Mr Jim Nulty (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Thomas McConville (Clerical Officer)

Present via teleconference facilities:

Ms Cara Hunter MLA

Apologies:

Mr Colin Crawford MLA



Northern Ireland Assembly

The meeting commenced at 2:00pm in public session.

1. Apologies

An apology was received from Mr Crawford.

2. Chairperson's Business

The Committee discussed the Concurrent Committee of the Committee for the Economy and the Committee for Education.

3. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Matters Arising

The Committee discussed correspondence from the Department of Education in relation to carrying over funding from 2024/2025 to 2025/2026.

5. Minutes of Proceedings

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of its meeting held on 7 May 2025.

Mr Martin joined the meeting at 2:03pm



Northern Ireland Assembly

6. Recommendations for Irish Medium - Oral Briefing by Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta

The Committee noted:

- A briefing paper from Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta; and
- A report 'The Provision for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in the Irish-medium Sector - May 2025'

The following witnesses joined the meeting at 2:03pm.

Ms Maria Thomasson, Chief Executive Officer, Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta

Ms Orla Nig Fhearraigh, Senior Education Officer, Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta

The witnesses provided the Committee with a briefing on the Irish Medium Education.

This was followed by a question and answer session.

7. Recommendations for Irish Medium - Oral Briefing by Department of Education Officials

The Committee noted a briefing paper from the Department of Education.

The following witnesses joined the meeting at 3:10pm.

Mr James Hutchinson, Director of Collaboration and Climate Change, Department of Education

Mr Maurice Girvin, Head of Irish Medium and Integrated Education Team, Department of Education

The witnesses provided the Committee with a briefing on Irish Medium Education.

This was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Education:

- Seeking information on how the Department intended to address the need for specialist provision in mainstream schools (SPIMS) in Irish Medium Schools;



Northern Ireland Assembly

- Seeking information on the use of incentives to recruit and retain teachers in Irish Medium Schools; and
- Asking the Department to register specific outcomes relating to Irish Medium in the Special Educational Needs Outcome framework.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:44pm.

The meeting resumed at 3:51pm.

8. Integrated Education Update - Oral Briefing by Department of Education Officials

The Committee noted Vision 2030, Strategy for Integrated Education, Action Plan and Benchmark Data.

The following witnesses joined the meeting at 3:51pm.

Mr James Hutchinson, Director of Collaboration and Climate Change, Department of Education

Mr Adrian Murphy, Head of Integrated Education Act Implementation and Climate Change Team, Department of Education

The witnesses provided the Committee with a briefing on the Integrated Education Vision 2030 Strategy.

This was followed by a question and answer session.

9. Correspondence

9.1 The Committee noted a correspondence Index.

9.2 The Committee noted the 38th Report Of the Examiner of Statutory Rules.

9.3 The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance providing 2024-25 Public Expenditure Outturn and Forecast Outturn information.



Northern Ireland Assembly

9.4 The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for the Economy regarding a Stranmillis University College Review.

9.5 The Committee noted correspondence regarding a concert to be held in Parliament Buildings.

9.6 The Committee noted a response from the Department of Education providing an update on legislative plans for the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI).

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking an update on reviews of Arm's Length Bodies.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the NITC seeking its views on the Department's legislative plans for GTCNI.

9.7 The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Infrastructure regarding final budget allocations for 2025-26.

9.8 The Committee noted a submission from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission on the School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Bill.

9.9 The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Infrastructure on road safety and school buses.

9.10 The Committee noted a briefing paper on outdoor education from the Education Authority outdoor centre at Magilligan.

9.11 The Committee noted correspondence from Unite the Union regarding the number of Classroom / General / Nursery Assistants in temporary positions.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Unite seeking a written briefing paper on this matter.

9.12 The Committee noted a submission from NICCY on the School Uniforms Bill.

9.13 The Committee noted a submission from an individual on the School Uniforms Bill.

10. Forward Work Programme

The Committee discussed a draft forward work programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to extend its call for written evidence on the School Uniforms Bill.



Northern Ireland Assembly

The Committee agreed its Forward Work Programme.

11. Any Other Business

The Committee discussed creating a template for briefing papers and agreed the Clerk would raise this with CLG secretariat.

12. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next Committee for Education meeting will be held on Wednesday 21 May 2025 at 2:00pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:41pm.

Nick Mathison MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Education
14 May 2025