



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Ad Hoc Committee on the School Uniforms (Trousers) Bill

Minutes of Proceedings

Tuesday 6 October 2026

Meeting Location: Room 29

Present:

Aoife Finnegan MLA (Chairperson)

Pam Cameron MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Deborah Erskine MLA

Andrew McMurray MLA

Emma Sheerin MLA

Apologies:

John Stewart MLA

In Attendance:

Jessica Jacques, Senior Assistant Clerk

Oliver Bellew, Assistant Clerk

Lisa Chestnutt, Clerical Supervisor

Lucy O'Hagan, Clerical Officer

The meeting commenced at 1:10pm in public session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2026.

4. Matters Arising

None.

5. Correspondence

None.

6. Chairperson's Business

None.

7. School Uniforms (Trousers) Bill – Consideration of Committee Report

The Committee noted a list of potentially defamatory comments identified in the written evidence received on the Bill, which it previously agreed would be redacted ahead of publication.

The Committee considered a draft report on the School Uniforms (Trousers) Bill.

Title Page, Table of Contents, Powers and Membership

The Committee considered the Title Page, Table of Contents, and Powers and Membership sections of the report as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Title Page, Table of Contents, and Powers and Membership sections of the report.

The School Uniforms (Trousers) Bill

The Committee considered the School Uniforms (Trousers) Bill section of the report (paragraphs 6 and 7) as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the School Uniforms (Trousers) Bill section of the report.

Committee Approach

The Committee considered the Committee Approach section of the report (paragraphs 8 to 22) as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Committee Approach section of the report.

Consideration of the Bill

The Committee considered the Consideration of the Bill section of the report (paragraphs 23 to 51) as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Consideration of the Bill section of the report.

Clause-by-Clause Scrutiny of the Bill

The Committee considered the Clause-by-Clause Scrutiny of the Bill section of the report (paragraphs 52 to 59) as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Clause-by-Clause Scrutiny of the Bill section of the report.

Executive Summary

The Committee considered the Executive Summary of the report (paragraphs 1 to 5) as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Executive Summary.

Links to Appendices

The Committee considered the Links to Appendices section of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Appendices should be included in the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Report on the School Uniforms (Trousers) Bill be the First Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the School Uniforms (Trousers) Bill to the Assembly.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Chairperson to approve the Minutes of Proceedings of this meeting for inclusion in the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that any formatting or typographical errors would be corrected by the Secretariat team in advance of the publication of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Report on the School Uniforms (Trousers) Bill to be published.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to issue the report to the organisations and individuals which provided evidence to the Committee on the Bill.

The Committee noted that the report will be laid in the Business Office and that all MLAs will be informed of its publication.

The Committee noted that correspondence would issue to the Minister of Education to highlight the Committee's discussions around the use of the term 'leg coverings', and to

ask him to ensure that the school uniforms guidelines continue to reflect that a variety of appropriate garments may be worn for recreational, sporting or outdoor activities.

8. Any Other Business

None.

9. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

There are no further scheduled meetings of the Committee.

The Chairperson thanked Members for their contributions during the Committee Stage of the Bill.

The meeting was adjourned at 1.16pm.

Aoife Finnegan MLA

Chairperson, Ad Hoc Committee on the School Uniforms (Trousers) Bill

6 October 2026