



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Education

Report on the School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Bill

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Report: NIA 107/22-27 Committee for Education.

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Powers and Membership

Powers

The Committee for Education is a Statutory Departmental Committee established in accordance with Paragraphs 8 and 9 of Strand One of the Belfast Agreement and under Assembly Standing Order No 48. The Committee has a scrutiny, policy development and consultation role with respect to the Department of Education and has a role in the initiation of legislation.

The Committee has power to:

- consider and advise on Departmental budgets and Annual Plans in the context of the overall budget allocation;
- approve relevant secondary legislation and take the Committee Stage of relevant primary legislation;
- call for persons and papers;
- initiate enquiries and make reports; and
- consider and advise on matters brought to the Committee by the Minister of Education.

Membership

The Committee has 9 members, including a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, and a quorum of five members. The membership of the Committee is as follows:

- Mr Nick Mathison MLA, Alliance (Chairperson)
- Mr Pat Sheehan MLA, Sinn Féin (Deputy Chairperson)
- Mr Danny Baker MLA, Sinn Féin
- Mr Colin Crawford MLA, UUP¹
- Mr David Brooks MLA, DUP²³
- Mrs Michelle Guy MLA, Alliance⁴
- Ms Cara Hunter MLA, SDLP
- Mr Peter Martin MLA, DUP⁵
- Mrs Cathy Mason MLA, Sinn Féin

¹ Mr Colin Crawford replaced Mr Robbie Butler 7 October 2024

² Ms Cheryl Brownlee replaced Mr David Brooks 9 June 2025

³ Mr David Brooks replaced Ms Cheryl Brownlee 1 July 2025

⁴ Mrs Michelle Guy replaced Ms Kate Nicholl 9 September 2024

⁵ Mr Peter Martin replaced Ms Cheryl Brownlee 16 September 2024

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms used in this Report

This paragraph has the 'Normal' style applied to it.

Avoid using a table to list the abbreviations. The preferred format is:

DE: Department of Education

EFM: Explanatory and Financial Memorandum

ESR: Examiner for Statutory Rules

RaISe: Assembly Research and Information Services

ECHR: European Convention on Human Rights

UNCRC: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

UNCRPD: United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities

Executive Summary

1. This report sets out the Committee for Education's consideration of the School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Bill.
2. The School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Bill was introduced to the Northern Ireland Assembly on 18 February 2025 and was referred to the Committee for Education for consideration after Second Stage, which took place on 3 March 2025.
3. The purpose of the Bill, which contains sixteen clauses, is to make provision for binding guidelines on school uniform policies to be issued by the Department of Education and to extend eligibility for school clothing allowances payable by the Education Authority.
4. The Committee's call for evidence featured ads in local newspapers accompanied by a social media campaign and targeted requests to core education stakeholders as well as additional stakeholders in s75 representative groups.
5. The Committee requested evidence from key pupil, parental, commercial, sectoral, rights advisory and counterpart organisations in other jurisdictions as well as the Department of Education as part of its deliberations on the Bill.
6. On 25 March 2025, the Minister wrote to the Committee to urge it to conduct a Committee Stage that would allow the Bill to complete all stages of the primary legislative process by summer recess.
7. The Committee replied outlining the necessary components of a properly conducted Committee Stage and declining to commit to this deadline. It committed however to carrying out its functions with urgency.
8. On 18 March the Committee agreed a motion to the House to extend the Committee Stage until 3 December 2025. In the debate on the motion on 7 April 2025, an amendment to an earlier date of 30 August 2025 was passed.
9. Later in the process the Committee expressed concerns about the Department of Education's engagement on the Bill and wrote to the Minister of Education, to

query whether perhaps there had been a miscalculation of timeframes and resourcing to meet them.

10. The Committee did not consider summer recess/school holidays an appropriate time in which to engage with education stakeholders and was concerned that the process would not have due transparency in that period, so it worked to complete its task by 2 July 2025.
11. The Committee agreed a revised timeframe and concerted process. It decided to set aside other workstreams; to accept written submissions for as long as possible; to hold additional weekly meetings; to begin oral evidence sessions without delay; to identify areas for amendment and initiate amendment requests to the Bill Office early in play; and to schedule engagement and clarifications with departmental officials in weekly meetings and via frequent correspondence.
12. The Committee did not have sight of the Department's proposed guidelines for schools, although initially it had been given to expect receipt of these. This would have been helpful in many instances, particularly for clarity with regard to the import of Clause 7 and context in developing Amendment 17. It now follows that the Committee's amendments to the primary legislation, if made, will determine the content of the guidelines rather than vice versa.
13. The Committee's priorities were to exact performance of affordability measures under the Bill; to ensure the best interest of every child and non-discrimination in the Bill; to articulate as principles of the Bill safety, inclusivity, period awareness and dignity generally; to limit contracts with retailers that might amount to market dominance; to improve transparency around sanctions for uniform breaches; to improve complaint handling and implementation reports for future monitoring of the Bill's effectiveness. These are the intended impact of its proposed amendments.
14. The Committee's considerations were informed by briefings from Assembly Research and Information Services; legal advice from Assembly Legal Services; advice on secondary regulation making powers and Assembly control by the Examiner for Statutory Rules; and procedural advice from the Bill Clerk and the Committee Clerk.

15. Given time constraints, the Committee endeavoured to expedite its deliberations and effected some of its processes in parallel rather than in sequence.
16. At its meeting on 1 July 2025 the Committee undertook formal clause-by-clause consideration and agreed 23 amendments to the Clauses as drafted; these are outlined in the formal clause-by-clause agreement section of this report.
17. In all the Committee received 19 substantive written submissions; held 18 oral evidence sessions; commissioned 24 draft amendments; and met 13 times in 9 weeks with two and sometimes three meetings a week to scrutinise the Bill.

Chronology and Process

18. The School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Bill (NIA Bill 12/22-27) was referred to the Committee in accordance with Standing Order 33 on completion of the Second Stage of the Bill on 3 March 2025.
19. View the EFM and the Bill: [School Uniforms \(Guidelines and Allowances\) Bill](#)
20. At introduction, the Minister for Education made the following statement under Section 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998: "*In my view the School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Bill would be within the legislative competence of the Northern Ireland Assembly.*"
21. The stated purpose of the Bill is to make provision for binding guidelines on school uniform policies to be issued by the Department of Education and to extend eligibility for school clothing allowances payable by the Education Authority.
22. During the period covered by this Report, the Committee considered the Bill and related issues at 13 meetings. All meetings were reported by Hansard.
23. The relevant Minutes of Proceedings for these meetings are included at Appendix 2.
24. The Committee had before it the School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Bill (NIA Bill 12/22-27) and the Explanatory and Financial Memorandum (EFM) that accompanied the Bill.
25. Prior to the introduction of the Bill on 18 February, the Department of Education conducted a public consultation on several options regarding school uniform.
26. The Department's consultation was not on the provisions of the Bill as drafted, however, and while the Committee read many consultation responses from this exercise, it made its own call for evidence to gather the views of stakeholders on the provisions of the Bill.

27. The Committee's call for evidence featured ads in local newspapers accompanied by a social media campaign inviting everyone who wished to contribute to the Committee's process to do so in writing in the first instance.
28. The call for evidence ran initially from 18 March 2025 - 13 May 2025 and was then extended, with final submissions arriving w/c 23 June 2025.
29. The Committee also made targeted requests to core education stakeholders - key pupil, parental, commercial, sectoral, rights advisory representatives and counterpart organisations in other jurisdictions - as well as additional stakeholders in s75 representative groups.
30. Nineteen substantive responses were received from sectoral bodies and individual stakeholders. These were studied and where possible themes followed up in the oral evidence sessions so that Members could explore a variety of perspectives on the Bill.
31. The Committee sought and received advice from the Examiner for Statutory Rules on the extent of and scrutiny mechanisms for the regulation-making powers proposed by the Bill.
32. The Committee commissioned the Northern Ireland Assembly Research and Information Service (RaISe) to provide research on the content and implications of the Bill. The Committee received an oral briefing from RaISe on 30 April 2025 which explored the provisions of the Bill (as introduced); provided comparisons with similar legislation in other jurisdictions; and identified issues for the Committee's further consideration. The Committee asked RaISe to complete some additional research in relation to inclusivity and to identify additional stakeholders from representative groups. All RaISe papers are included at Appendix 7.
33. The Committee sought and received legal advice from Assembly Legal Services (ALS) on human rights aspects of the Bill, on disciplinary measures and participatory disadvantages and on the use of directions or mandamus in securing compliance. A summary of legal advice follows this section.
34. The Committee issued correspondence to the Department on issues raised in the research paper, queries raised by the Examiner for Statutory Rules and

other matters of clarification. Correspondence received from the Department is included at Appendix 1.

35. The Committee identified areas for amendment as a result of these queries and responses, and given the short time available commissioned these from the Bill Office. It was anticipated that clearance times would impede requests for amendments to be drafted by the Department's drafting counsel. Nevertheless, the Committee advised the Department of amendment areas and in due course the text of amendments commissioned.
36. The Department of Education briefed the Committee at its meetings of 5 March 2025, 28 May 2025, 11 June 2025 and 17 June 2025 and gave apologies at the meetings of 21 May 2025 and 5 June 2025.
37. The Committee expressed concerns about the Department of Education's engagement on the Bill and on 23 June 2025 wrote to the Minister of Education, to query whether perhaps there had been a miscalculation of timeframes and resourcing to meet them.
38. After the Bill completed its Second Stage on 03 March 2025, the Committee arranged to take oral evidence on the Bill from relevant stakeholders and the Department. The Committee heard from the following:
 - Department of Education – 5 March 2025
 - RaISe – 30 April 2025
 - Retail NI – 7 May 2025
 - Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission – 27 May 2025
 - Department of Education – 28 May 2025
 - National Association Of Head Teachers – 28 May 2025
 - NIC ICTU – 28 May 2025
 - Northern Ireland Youth Assembly – 3 June 2025

- Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People Youth panel – 3 June 2025
 - Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People – 3 June 2025
 - Diverse Youth NI – 3 June 2025
 - Competition and Markets Authority – 4 June 2025
 - Parenting Focus – 4 June 2025
 - Menstruation Matters – 4 June 2025
 - Women's Regional Consortium – 4 June 2025
 - Department of Education – 11 June 2025
 - Schoolwear Association – 17 June 2025
 - Department of Education – 17 June 2025
39. As is customary, the Official Report (Hansard) provided a report of the above evidence sessions and of formal deliberations on the Bill. (Quorum was not achieved for the early Schoolwear Association briefing of 17 June so a non-Hansard transcript has been provided).
40. The role of Hansard in reporting the legislative process is not only to produce a substantially verbatim report of proceedings but under the *Pepper v Hart* [1992] ruling on the use of legislative debate in statutory interpretation, as a reference for the courts to ascertain legislative intention where the law appears ambiguous.
41. All Hansard reports of the Committee's deliberations are at appendix 5.
42. The Committee identified as priorities: to exact performance of affordability measures under the Bill; to ensure the best interest of every child and non-discrimination in the Bill; to articulate as principles of the Bill safety, inclusivity, period awareness and dignity generally; to safeguard affordability by limiting contracts with retailers that might amount to market dominance; to improve

transparency around sanctions for uniform breaches; and to improve complaint handling and implementation reports for future monitoring of the Bill's effectiveness.

43. These are the intended impact of its proposed amendments.
44. The Committee's amendments are provided in the table below alongside clause-by-clause decision-making.
45. Committee deliberations on the clauses of the Bill were conducted at its meetings of 11 June 2025 and 18 June 2025 with members already attending closely to a clause-by-clause analysis of issues of concern.
46. Informal consideration of clauses and amendments took place in closed session on 11, 18, 25 June 2025 and 1 July 2025.
47. The formal clause-by-clause decision-making on the Bill was completed at the meeting of 1 July 2025. The relevant Minutes of Evidence of these meetings are included at Appendix 5.

School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Bill: Clause-by-Clause Decisions

Amendment number	Amendment text	
1	<p>Clause 1, Page 1, Line 10</p> <p>Leave out 'from time to time' and insert 'at least once every three years'</p>	Agreed unanimously
2	<p>Clause 1, Page 1, Line 12, at end insert –</p> <p>'(1A)(1) When developing or reviewing such guidelines, the Department must have due regard to the requirements of Articles 3, 14, 23, 28 and 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted</p>	Agreed on a majority of voices

	<p>and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989.</p> <p>(1B)(1) The Schedule sets out the text of Articles 3, 14, 23, 28 and 29 referred to in section (1A)(1).'</p>	
3	<p>Clause 1, Page 1, Line 18</p> <p>Leave out 'may' and insert 'must'</p>	Agreed on a majority of voices
4	<p>Clause 1, Page 2, Line 1</p> <p>After 'who' insert ', including pupils and their parents or guardians,'</p>	Agreed unanimously

5	<p>Clause 1, Page 2, Line 9</p> <p>At end insert –</p> <p>‘(6) The Department must lay any guidelines issued under this section before the Assembly.’</p>	Agreed unanimously
Clause 1 as amended		Agreed unanimously
6	<p>Clause 2, Page 2, Line 12</p> <p>At end insert –</p> <p>‘(1A) Guidelines under this Chapter must include provision prohibiting any aspects of school uniform policies which restrict choice of items of clothing</p>	Agreed on a majority of voices

	on the basis of sex or gender.'	
7	<p>Clause 2, Page 2, Line 15</p> <p>After 'pupils,' insert 'including with respect to menstruation'</p>	Agreed unanimously
8	<p>Clause 2, Page 2, Line 15</p> <p>At end insert –</p> <p>'(aa) practicality of clothing in relation to play-based curricula and outdoor learning, including within the Foundation Stage (as defined by the Education (Curriculum Minimum Content) Order (Northern Ireland) 2007)'</p>	Agreed on a majority of voices

9	<p>Clause 2, Page 2, Line 15</p> <p>At end insert –</p> <p>‘(aa) promoting the safety of pupils with regard to road traffic’</p>	Agreed unanimously
10	<p>Clause 2, Page 2, Line 18</p> <p>At end insert –</p> <p>‘(2A) Guidelines under this Chapter must include provision requiring school uniform policies to allow reasonable accommodations for cultural difference, religious practice, disability or special educational needs.’</p>	Agreed on a majority of voices

11	<p>Clause 2, Page 2, Line 18</p> <p>At end insert –</p> <p>‘(2A) Guidelines under this Chapter must include provision requiring school uniform policies to ensure all items of clothing required are available for purchase from at least one retailer or provider which does not hold any formal or informal contract or agreement, with the school, relating to provision of such items of clothing.</p> <p>(2B) Guidelines under this Chapter must include provision specifying that section 2A will</p>	Agreed unanimously

	<p>not apply to any school uniform policy which includes a statement from the school manager explaining how such a contract or agreement delivers value for money with respect to items of clothing required by the school uniform policy.’</p>	
12	<p>Clause 2, Page 2, Line 18</p> <p>At end insert –</p> <p>“(2A) Guidelines under this Chapter must include provision requiring a manager of a school to publish, at least once per year, information regarding any</p>	Agreed unanimously

	<p>formal or informal contracts or agreements, which the school holds with any retailer or provider, relating to provision of items of clothing required by the school uniform policy.</p> <p>(2B) Provision under section 2A does not apply to any contracts or agreements which were in place before this Act received Royal Assent.'</p>	
13	<p>Clause 2, Page 2, Line 18</p> <p>At end insert –</p> <p>‘(2A) Guidelines under this Chapter must require each school to</p>	Agreed unanimously

	facilitate or participate in a uniform reuse, loan, or bank scheme.'	
14	<p>Clause 2, Page 2, Line 18</p> <p>At end insert –</p> <p>‘(2A) Guidelines under this Chapter must include provision requiring school uniform policies to permit reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability or special educational needs, where items of clothing required by those policies cause distress or sensory discomfort or present a barrier to participation.’</p>	Agreed unanimously

15	<p>Clause 2, Page 2, Line 18</p> <p>At end insert –</p> <p>‘(2A) The Department must issue guidance, in consultation with relevant advocacy groups and organisations, on how schools may adapt uniform policies to accommodate pupils with a disability or special educational needs.’</p>	Agreed unanimously
Clause 2 as amended		<p>Agreed on Division:</p> <p>6 in favour;</p> <p>NM,PS,CM,DB,MG,CH</p> <p>2 against; PM, DB</p>

16	<p>Clause 3, Page 2, Line 29</p> <p>Leave out 'may' and insert 'must'</p>	Agreed on a majority of voices
17	<p>Clause 3, Page 2, Line 34</p> <p>At end insert –</p> <p>'(2) In particular, guidelines under this Chapter must include provision requiring school uniform policies to require no more than four items of clothing which bear school-specific features.</p> <p>(3) Guidelines under this Chapter must further include provision prohibiting school uniform policies from requiring school-</p>	<p>This amendment was not agreed.</p> <p>A number of members wanted to bring this forward but there was not Committee agreement about this wording. Without sight of guidelines and without a clear direction on a cap this is a particularly difficult and complex amendment to draft. Overall, members wanted to do further work together after the Committee Stage to develop precise wording to</p>

	<p>specific features on any shirt, blouse, trousers, skirts, tights, socks or shoes.</p> <p>(4) For the purposes of this section, an item of clothing bears school-specific features if it is</p> <p>(a) branded with a crest, logo, motto, emblem, marking or name which is distinctive to the school</p> <p>(b) of a particular make, style, combination or fabric, or</p> <p>(c) otherwise identifiable as a distinctive element of the school uniform.</p> <p>(5) Guidelines under this Chapter must, where</p>	<p>ensure the intended effect</p> <p>and avoid unintended consequences</p>
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	practicable, include provision requiring school uniform policies to permit the application of badges, emblems or markings to generic items of clothing as an alternative to items of clothing bearing school- specific features.'	
Clause 3 as amended		Agreed on Division: 6 in favour; NM,PS,CM,DB,MG,CH 2 against; PM, DB
Clause 4 as drafted		Agreed unanimously
18	After clause 4 insert – 'Reporting on school uniform costs and	Agreed unanimously

	<p>capping of expense</p> <p>4A. (1) The Department must publish a written report, at least once every three years, detailing–</p> <p>(a) Its assessment of the cost of school uniforms and their components, including mean costs, median costs and factors contributing to these, and</p> <p>(b) The effect of any capping of expense included in guidelines as a result of section (4), or if no such capping of expense has been set, the reasons for this, and</p>	
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	<p>(c) Its subsequent plans for</p> <p>(i) Reviewing and, if appropriate, amending the guidelines, and</p> <p>(ii) Imposing, ending or otherwise modifying any capping of expense.’</p> <p>(2) The first report under paragraph (1) must be published within the period of 3 years beginning with the date on which this Act receives Royal Assent.</p>	
Clause 5 as drafted		Agreed unanimously
19	<p>Clause 6, Page 3, Line 29</p> <p>At end insert –</p>	Agreed on a majority of voices

	<p>‘(3) A manager of a school must publish and operate procedures to enable complaints to be made concerning the school uniform policy, which must include provision permitting the school a maximum of three calendar months to issue a final response to any complaint.’</p>	
Clause 6 as amended		<p>Agreed on Division:</p> <p>6 in favour; NM,PS,CM,DB,MG,CH</p> <p>2 against; PM, DB</p>
20	<p>Clause 7, Page 3, Line 31</p> <p>Leave out subsections (1) and (2) and insert –</p>	Agreed unanimously

	<p>‘7.—(1) The Department must give directions as follows to a manager of a school if the Department is satisfied that the manager is (or staff at the school are) in one or more material respects failing to adhere as required to guidelines under this Chapter.</p> <p>(2) The Department may give directions to a manager of a school as follows if the Department is satisfied that the school’s pupils are liable to disciplinary measures or participatory disadvantages at the insistence of</p>	
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	the manager (or of staff at the school) in consequence of breaching a school uniform policy applying at the school.'	
21	<p>Clause 7, Page 4, Line 11</p> <p>Leave out paragraph (b)</p>	Agreed unanimously
22	<p>Clause 7, Page 4, Line 30</p> <p>At end insert –</p> <p>'(8) Where the Department gives directions to a school, it must publish these within three months of the directions first being given.'</p>	Agreed unanimously
Clause 7 as amended		Agreed unanimously

Clauses 8-14 as drafted		Agreed unanimously
23	<p>Clause 15, Page 7, Line 4</p> <p>Leave out 'Sections 3 and 4 come' and insert 'Section 4 comes'</p>	Agreed unanimously
Clause 15 as amended		Agreed unanimously
Clause 16 (short title) as drafted		Agreed unanimously
24	<p>After clause 16 insert –</p> <p>'SCHEDULE</p> <p>THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD</p>	<p>Agreed on Division:</p> <p>6 in favour; NM,PS,CM,DB,MG,CH</p> <p>2 against; PM, DB</p>

	<p>Article 3</p> <p>1 In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.</p> <p>2 States Parties undertake to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being, taking into account the rights and duties of his or her parents, legal guardians, or other individuals legally</p>	
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	<p>responsible for him or her, and, to this end, shall take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures.</p> <p>3 States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision.</p>	
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	<p>Article 14</p> <p>1 States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.</p> <p>2 States Parties shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.</p> <p>3 Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by</p>	
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	<p>law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.</p> <p>Article 23</p> <p>1 States Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.</p> <p>2 States Parties recognize the right of the disabled child to special care and shall encourage and ensure the</p>	
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	<p>extension, subject to available resources, to the eligible child and those responsible for his or her care, of assistance for which application is made and which is appropriate to the child's condition and to the circumstances of the parents or others caring for the child.</p> <p>3 Recognizing the special needs of a disabled child, assistance extended in accordance with paragraph 2 of the present article shall be provided free of charge,</p>	
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	<p>whenever possible, taking into account the financial resources of the parents or others caring for the child, and shall be designed to ensure that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and</p>	
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	<p>spiritual development.</p> <p>4 States Parties shall promote, in the spirit of international cooperation, the exchange of appropriate information in the field of preventive health care and of medical, psychological and functional treatment of disabled children, including dissemination of and access to information concerning methods of rehabilitation, education and vocational services, with the aim of enabling States Parties to</p>	
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	<p>improve their capabilities and skills and to widen their experience in these areas. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.</p> <p>Article 28</p> <p>1 States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:</p> <p>(a) make primary education</p>	
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	<p>compulsory and available free to all;</p> <p>(b) encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;</p> <p>(c) make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;</p>	
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	<p>(d) make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;</p> <p>(e) take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.</p> <p>2 States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.</p>	
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	<p>3 States Parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.</p>	
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	<p>Article 29</p> <p>1 States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:</p> <p>(a) the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;</p> <p>(b) the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;</p> <p>(c) the development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and</p>	
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	<p>values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;</p> <p>(d) the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;</p> <p>(e) the development of</p>	
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	<p>respect for the natural environment.</p> <p>2 No part of the present article or article 28 shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principle set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article and to the requirements that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid</p>	
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	down by the State.'	
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Consideration of the Bill



Consideration of human rights issues arising from the School Uniforms
(Guidelines and Allowances) Bill

48. The Assembly's Legal Services Office ('Legal Services') provides on-demand advice to Assembly Committees. Committees may request such advice on a wide range of issues arising from Bills.
49. Under section 6 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, issues of non-discrimination, compatibility with the European Convention on Human Rights (the Convention) and non-diminution of certain rights set out in the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement limit the Assembly's power to make laws.
50. Assembly Committees tasked with Committee Stage scrutiny of a bill on behalf of the whole Assembly may seek legal advice as to human rights directly or indirectly engaged by its provisions, and factor that into its decision-making.
51. Assembly Committees alongside the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and Equality Commission for Northern Ireland are creatures of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement and partner in verifying the outworkings of its rights-based framework. Committees play an important role in representing the rights of citizens and can modify Executive action. Notably, if a department has not identified rights impacts in pre-legislative scrutiny, the Committee process is a second opportunity to identify and highlight such issues in its report and if necessary propose amendments to try to secure their protection in the final iteration of the draft legislation.
52. Human rights considerations the Committee may wish to examine as part of its scrutiny function
53. Legal advice sought by the Committee for Education on the School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Bill addressed the applicable human rights framework here and the relevant provisions of:
 54. the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which outlines what are fundamental rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities;
 55. the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) the purpose of which is to promote, protect and ensure the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities;

- 56. the Convention;
- 57. equality matters under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998; and
- 58. Article 2(1) of the Windsor Framework, which adds non-diminution of certain rights after Brexit.

UN Treaties

- 59. The Committee was advised that the UNCRC was ratified in the UK in 1991 and the UNCRPD in 2009 but that as neither international treaty had been incorporated into domestic law, they had limited effect. However, they may play a significant role in informing the analysis of the Convention rights in domestic law.
- 60. Highlighted as having particular relevance to the Bill were UNCRC Articles 28 (the right to education); 29 (goals of education); and Article 3, relating to the best interests of the child.
- 61. Similarly, UNCRPD Article 7 protects children with disabilities and states that they should have the same human rights as all other children. The best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children with disabilities. Children with disabilities have the right to express their views on all matters affecting them. UNCRPD Article 24 is also of note as it deals with education and states that people with disabilities have a right to education without discrimination.
- 62. It was noted that the Bill engages these rights as comfort, practicality and accessibility in respect of school uniforms is of particular importance to children with disabilities as well as children with Special Educational Needs and sensory issues; and advice cautioned against failure to include in the Bill provisions which allow for relevant accommodations.

The Convention

- 63. The legal advice to the Committee noted that—
- 64. Article 8 in respect of privacy and family life was likely to be engaged by the Bill, but the Bill would be likely to enhance access to the rights in Northern Ireland.

65. Article 9 in respect of freedom of thought, conscience and religion might be engaged by the Bill, but any interference with this right occasioned by the Bill would be in the general interest and readily justified.
66. Article 14 in respect of prohibition of discrimination may be engaged with reference to the other rights identified, but in circumstances where the interference with those other rights was legitimate and proportionate was unlikely to provide a cause of action.
67. Article 1 of the First Protocol might be engaged in respect of the potential effects on the uniform retailers' market as a result of the affordability provisions of the Bill, but any interference with the right would be in the general interest and readily justified.
68. Article 2 of the First Protocol may be engaged, but the right secured by this Article was likely to be enhanced.

Article 2(1) of the Windsor Framework

69. The legal advice to Committee noted that under Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity was a national competence and the Windsor Framework was not engaged.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

70. The Committee notes that the Department of Education, the EA and school management must have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity in respect of the groups set out at section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, and took account of this in its scrutiny.
71. Section 75 requires that the Department of Education, the EA and school management must have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity in respect of 9 particular groups.
72. This equality duty alongside the provisions of the UN treaties and ECHR outlined above provide a framework to assist the Department in balancing rights

and preventing discrimination iro sex, disability and religion under this legislation.

Caselaw

73. The caselaw in relation to school uniforms is relevant to the terms of clause 7, which makes provision in relation to disciplinary measures and participatory disadvantages. Exclusion and disciplinary measures may be unlawful and leave the Department vulnerable to judicial review.
74. However, the Committee is content that this wide power may be exercised in a lawful and proportionate way.
75. The Committee takes account of section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which states that a Minister or Northern Ireland department has no power to make, confirm or approve any subordinate legislation, or to do any act, so far as the legislation or act is incompatible with any of the Convention rights or is incompatible with Article 2(1) of the Windsor Framework.

Stakeholder input

76. The Committee further considered the perspectives and proposed amendments of the stakeholders it engaged with and assessed these through the lens of research, legal, drafting and procedural advice and with the input of the departmental Bill Team for clarification and background information.
77. Below are tables setting out the issues raised by each stakeholder on each clause and compiling the amendments proposed by each stakeholder.
78. The Committee agreed this report subject to formatting and typographical changes on 2 July 2025 and ordered it to be published today, 3 July 2025.

	Clause 4	Clause 5	Clause 6
DE	DE have concerns about explicitly stating a price cap or limit on branded	DE explained Clause 5 allows for the guidelines to differentiate between	DE explained Clause 6, importantly, places a duty on schools to adhere to the

	<p>items in the Bill. Need to have an agile process in place to see how works practically and if in guidelines could be easily amended.</p>	<p>primary schools, post-primary schools and school stages. They stated it gave flexibility in guidelines if there was differentiation required for uniform requirements where Key Stage 3 being different from those for Key Stage 4 or sixth form.</p>	<p>guidelines. The manager of a school must adhere to them when devising, reviewing, implementing or enforcing the uniform policy. The same applies to any member of staff involved.</p>
<p>National Association Of Head Teachers</p>	<p>Agree with making it affordable - No specific reference to cap or limit of branded items. "School Leaders often come together to ensure that we implement the affordable, inclusive and flexible uniform policy....."What schools can, and do, do is simplify uniform design, reduce branding and ensure a wide choice of purchasing options."</p>	<p>Guidance should apply to all schools</p>	<p>Support for engagement with school pupils when uniform policy being devised and reviewed. Issues with Compliance and enforcement as "creates further burden on schools with already overextended and under-resourced workforce." "Formalising it into law risks creating a disproportionate compliance burden on school leaders and governors without clear evidence that the current approach is failing. Introducing legal obligations to demonstrate, publish and review uniform policy at regular intervals risks adding yet another layer of bureaucracy to school leadership for a workforce that is already overextended and under-resourced."</p>

NICICTU	<p>Agree that there must be a standardised cost for uniforms across schools to ensure that the uniform does not present a barrier to education for any child.</p> <p>A cost-cap should be considered in consultation with children, young people, parents and carers.</p> <p>Financial or in-kind incentives from school uniform suppliers should be banned.</p>	Should cover all school age children including pre-school/nursery	The requirement for schools to justify and publish the cost of their uniform should encourage fair pricing and will ensure schools are committed to the principle of affordability.
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	<p>NIHRC welcome the fact that the aim of the Bill is to tackle affordability. Again in their response to the Department's consultation they highlighted areas where 'schools and Departments could track the disproportionate impact that certain children or families can experience on the basis of school uniform policies.' They provided the example of asylum-seeking children and their families, where the child may be required to move schools. They stated that "The</p>	No Comments on this clause	NIHRC stated that "if we could simply rely on boards of governors in schools to comply with equality legislation and human rights law in every single case, there would not be a need for any regulation of schools. Unfortunately, there are minimum standards that are not always being met." They advised there needs to be a "framework and a system in place to make sure that those standards will be met."

	<p>school uniform grant is provided once, but the family might be required to pay for two different uniforms in the same year."</p> <p>In relation to whether a cost-cap prescribed in the primary legislation NIHRC stated that <i>"The cap is a very difficult one. It is beyond our scope to talk about the level of the cap, but it should be a consideration."</i></p> <p>They state that the legislation should not be so <i>"overly prescriptive as to remove all sense from its application.....but, if you take into account what everyone says, each school is able to then make an informed decision about its uniform policy. As long as it meets certain minimum standards, which should be set and prescribed by the legislation, you will get proper balance."</i></p>		
Retail NI	<p>Retail NI see the main area of concern for cost to parents is the sportswear side of school wear. Dealing with that first would bring</p>	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause

	<p>about the most effective change.</p> <p><i>"The cost of school uniforms has not necessarily spiralled. School uniforms have not changed: what has changed is the introduction of compulsory branded sports kits."</i> They state these are <i>"provided exclusively by sports companies that have negotiated a monopoly on the supply of those items. That has raised the price of uniforms as a whole and ruined the reputation of and negatively impacted on the small family businesses before you, which have been providing uniforms successfully for generations."</i> They say that their parents have options when it comes to where they want to shop and how much they want to pay for the standard school uniform, as well as options on the quality and price, but this is not the case across all the uniforms, including the PE kit.</p>		
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	<p>A cost-cap raises practical concerns for Retailers re: fluctuation in costs such as when the national minimum wage increases ;shipping costs rise, materials fluctuate; and VAT would also have to be accounted for. They state that if <i>"someone in first year is wearing a size 38, he will need a different price cap from a person who is wearing a smaller size, and the price varies greatly."</i></p> <p>Retail NI referred to the fact that the Uniform Grant has not changed in years despite the cost of living increasing, "If you do the same with the price cap as you have done with the uniform grant, it will not move, so it is not really going to work".</p> <p>On the point of Limiting the number of school branded items Retail NI suggest that there is an option of compulsory and non-compulsory items e.g Girls like the school scarf for Winter time but this would not need to be a compulsory item.</p>		
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Northern Ireland Youth Assembly	Youth Assembly Members feel that appropriate price caps for each stage of school life should be part of the legislation.	Youth Assembly Members are of the view that all children, including those in preschool settings where a uniform is required, should be included in the Bill.	Youth Assembly Members welcome this clause that schools will publish their policies and that it should include children/young people version
NICCY Youth Forum	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
NICCY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Children's Commissioner recommends that a cap on costs be introduced, as that is required to make the legislation meaningful. •NICCY further emphasise the importance of the need for the uniform grant to be raised to reflect the actual cost of uniforms, and not to be restricted to once per year. They state there is a need to recognise the cost in the context of the draft anti-poverty strategy. • NICCY informed the Committee of an Ulster University published report called, 'Sport is NOT a luxury' whereby one of the statistics is that 37% of parents and guardians said that their children had missed out on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •NICCY cited that children who attend nursery school are eligible to apply for free school meals, but they cannot apply for a uniform grant. The Bill should seek to include nursery or preschools. 	NICCY state need consultation with parents and carers when devising or changing uniform policy

	sport or physical activity because of the cost. " Children and parents are saying that the cost of school uniforms, branded PE kits and all the equipment is too high. The cost of education, which is supposed to be free, is a barrier to children attending school or taking part in sports and physical activity."		
Diverse Youth NI	Diverse Youth welcome cost caps and value for money . Witness highlighted there is a big difference in cost between Grammar School uniform and High school uniform (personal experience)	Diverse Youth feel the guidelines need to include pre-school/ early years	Diverse Youth welcome consultation with families when school uniform policies are being revised and that there is adequate communication of these new policies.
CMA	CMA advised the committee that a price cap on uniforms could potentially raise concern for retailers particularly if you are doing an item-by-item cap " because then you are really in the territory of potentially having to monitor and adjust input costs. A price cap on the uniform as a whole may also create potential compliance burdens for	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause

	schools and the Department of Education in assessing whether schools are complying. This is because, for the generic items that form part of that overall cap, the price varies a lot. CMA state if there is a price cap, suppliers may try to recoup the costs through other add on fees, if they are having to sell at a lower price.		
Parenting Focus	Parenting Focus state the Bill must mandate a clear cap or maximum threshold on the total cost of a uniform. (97% of those surveyed supporting the introduction of a cap)."Without a cap, there is no real safeguard against escalating costs or inequity between schools." Parenting Focus did however state that there was ambiguity among parents what this cap would look like so Further consultation is necessary to explore the options .	No Comments on this clause	Parenting Focus support the requirement in the bill for schools to publish their uniform policies and report their costs,(this should include feedback on the consultation ;demonstrate how a school is implementing the guidance, detail what costs were incurred by families and reveal whether adjustments were made as a result of the consultation or complaints.)
Menstruation Matters	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	Menstruation Matters advocates for choice in comfortable clothing during menstruation i.e.

			trousers for girls. They state trousers do not need to be branded, <i>"if you have your crest on your jumper and blazer. , that would be a great way to bring down cost. "</i> .
Women's Regional Consortium	WRC would like to see an embedded price cap to ensure that costs are kept to a minimum. They referred to polling by Save the Children Northern Ireland shows that six in 10 parents find the cost of school uniforms and PE kit financially challenging.	No Comments on this clause	WRC support the view that schools should be open and transparent about school uniform costs and these should be published.

	Clause 7	Clause 8	Clause 9
Department of Education	DE advised Clause 7 provides the power for the Department to: "give directions to a manager of a school" if it is satisfied that the school has materially not adhered to the guidelines or that pupils are subjected to disciplinary action or participatory disadvantage for breaching the policy. It sets out the means by which	DE referred to this clause as defines "unfair costs aspects", and means: <i>"any aspects of school uniform policies which, in the Department's view, could ... raise questions"</i> about excessive costs of individual or all uniform items or sets of clothing or, again, the limited choice of suppliers. They state the language has been carefully worked	DE advised Clause 9 defines the full range of branded items, covering any unusual colours or fabrics. The Bill's references to "specific styles" provides the power to address issues of accessibility, equality and other matters that are particularly relevant for pupils with SEN or sensory issues.

	<p>the Department becomes satisfied, such as assessment of the published policy information, a complaint or through an Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) report. The Department also has to consult the school before issuing the guidelines, for reasons of balance.. Directions must therefore be followed in the same way in which article 101 of the 1986 Order must be, and they are enforceable by court proceedings if a school does not do so.</p>	<p>through to cover all those areas. They state that Terms such as:</p> <p><i>"The Department is ... to have special regard to",</i></p> <p><i>"higher costs of ... specific styles", and</i></p> <p><i>"non-affordability ... to lower income households"</i> mean that those are some of the first things that the Department has to bear in mind when considering <i>"unfair costs aspects"</i>, which clause 2 requires to be addressed in the guidelines.</p>	
National Association Of Head Teachers	<p>Compliance and enforcement creates further burden on schools with already overextended and under-resourced workforce. "A statutory requirement brings with it potential legal consequences for non-compliance that could create tensions between schools and families, and between schools and the</p>	<p>Support principle of affordability and limited branded items but not statutory guidance. Existing guidelines should be strengthened.,... caution against the notion that schools should be responsible for stimulating a competitive uniform market. Schools are not businesses. Their role is to support learning and well-being, not to serve as an</p>	<p>Support principle of affordability and limited branded items but not statutory guidance. Existing guidelines should be strengthened.</p>

	<p>Department, at a time when we should be fostering trust and collaboration."</p> <p>They state that School leaders need clarity but also need to be able to have autonomy and flexibility. They are of the opinion that robust enforcement mechanisms will only complicate relationships with pupils and parents and the department.</p>	<p>intermediary in the retail economy."</p>	
NICICTU	<p>Bill should include measures to ensure no school can exclude pupils where cost of school uniform has prohibited a pupil from following guidelines.</p>	<p>Agree should be requirement for schools to justify and publish the cost of their uniform to encourage fair pricing and will ensure schools are committed to the principle of affordability.</p> <p>Schools need to demonstrate how they have taken the costs into account when designing their uniforms and should aim to make access to education as accessible as possible.</p> <p>Should have to justify the need for minor changes to uniforms to reflect success or achievement (e.g. a different blazer for being on a sports team)</p>	<p>Schools need to demonstrate how they have taken the costs into account when designing their uniforms and should aim to make access to education as accessible as possible.</p> <p>Should have to justify the need for minor changes to uniforms to reflect success or achievement (e.g. a different blazer for being on a sports team)</p> <p>Where a crest is necessary, they should be purchased alone rather than embroidered or printed onto the uniform</p>

		<p>•Branded PE uniforms are too costly and prohibitive. PE kits should be entirely non-branded</p>	
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	<p>NIHRC state there needs to be a statutory obligation to comply with the guidelines, or it has to be specifically stated in statute so that everybody knows exactly what is being asked of them. They advised there needs to be a <i>"framework and a system in place to make sure that those standards will be met."</i></p>	<p>NIHRC stated that the overwhelming evidence is that school uniforms are creating a financial burden. In their departmental consultation response, they identified areas where further measures could be taken "to ensure that uniform costs were as low as possible and whether policy could stipulate basic items and colours and state that high-cost items or items with unnecessary variations, such as school colours or variations for different year groups, could be avoided. The requirement for branded PE kit at any point of a child's involvement in extracurricular activities can have a prohibitive effect on their ability to fully participate."</p>	<p>relation to unfair costs</p>
Retail NI	<p>No Comments on this clause</p>	<p>Retail NI state that it is the PE Kit that is making school uniforms unaffordable. TRULY FARE(SUPPLIER) supply around 18</p>	<p>Retail NI do not consider it fair to do away with branded items rather to ensure better market competition for sportswear. They</p>

		<p>secondary schools, but only one PE uniform, because they cannot access the suppliers as the big brands have taken this over. The retailers part of the consortium so not think that it would be fair to ban branded sportswear completely but that there should be more options available for the sports.</p> <p>they stated that "lots of schools have several suppliers of everyday uniform items, yet most of the schools have one branded supplier for PE kit, and that is it. There is no option for us or anybody else to compete in that market. It is about allowing more competition in that market and more than one supplier and giving the parents greater options."</p>	<p>state that currently all their school uniform retailers stock different styles, quality and prices of the standard uniform items to give parents/guardians the choice. This could also be the case for PE Uniform.</p>
Northern Ireland Youth Assembly	<p>Youth Assembly Members feel that the Bill should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •require schools to make all pupils and parents aware of school and DE complaints procedures. <p>Make information available on the school's website. keep records of</p>	<p>Research shows that there are higher school uniform costs for female pupils than for male pupils, and we are curious to know how that will be addressed.</p> <p>Youth Assembly Members support the uniform policy being part of the overall whole-school</p>	<p>Youth Assembly Members believe there should be proportionate disciplinary responses in relation to non-adherence to the uniform policy but that this must never be used to isolate, suspend or exclude any children because</p>

	<p>complaints.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •have proportionate disciplinary responses and must never be used to isolate, suspend or exclude any children because of not wearing the exact uniform. <p>Youth Assembly Members provided the following examples: "I have heard of people coming into other schools wearing something that resembles the uniform but with one thing wrong with it — something to do with their hair, for example. They have been turned around at the gate and made to go home or have been given a detention. That is a bit extreme. You are putting them at a disadvantage for something that, in the view of most Members of the Youth Assembly, is quite a small thing. We do not think that it calls for exclusion"</p>	<p>inspection. They think the ETI should "should ask pupils about uniforms and consider how the school arrived at its decision and whom it consulted and should ensure that schools have robust consultation and complaints mechanisms."</p>	<p>of not wearing the exact uniform.</p>
<p>NICCY Youth Forum</p>	<p>there needs to be flexibility built into uniform policy and consideration given as to why there is infraction from the policy. The</p>	<p>No Comments on this clause</p>	<p>No Comments on this clause</p>

	sanction for small infringements of the policy (tie too short, shirt not tucked in. hoop earring instead of studs etc.) should not result in exclusion from education. Need to be proportionate.		
NICCY	Children's Commissioner says Pupils should not face significant sanctions, such as being sent home or isolated, for breaking school uniform rules. "A breach of uniform policy should not meet with discipline that could breach a child's fundamental right to education." •The Children's Commissioner recommends the committee consider the inclusion of additional enforceable guidance in this area to ensure that that does not happen.	Children's Commissioner says Pupils should not face significant sanctions, such as being sent home or isolated, for breaking school uniform rules. "A breach of uniform policy should not meet with discipline that could breach a child's fundamental right to education." •The Children's Commissioner recommends the committee consider the inclusion of additional enforceable guidance in this area to ensure that that does not happen.	No Comments on this clause
Diverse Youth NI	Diverse Youth do not agree that pupils should be penalised for not having the correct school attire.	Diverse Youth see the financial burden on families in respect of purchasing school uniforms and support that the bill ensures that all schools make uniforms affordable and accessible.	Diverse Youth support the removal of branded items and state that "if basic items, such as a plain shirt or jumper, are reasonably priced, families will not have to choose between buying food or uniforms".

CMA	No Comments on this clause	<p>CMA stated that although" the market for generic school uniform items is pretty competitive ,where schools mandate a particular design or brand, that will</p> <p>mechanically limit competition and choice for parents, because they cannot get those items from supermarkets or other retailers. Therefore, there is a less competitive market. "</p> <p>CMA acknowledged that it might not be practicable to have multiple suppliers of particular uniforms for small schools in rural areas. They stated that " a timelimited exclusive supplier arrangement is the best way for those schools to get the best deal."</p> <p>CMA stated they would expect that arrangement to be looked at and reviewed regularly and, where possible, potentially put out to competitive tender to ensure that schools and parents get the best value for those branded items.</p>	CMA refer to "branded items" as anything that bears the school logo or colours as opposed to sports brands and state that the term branded needs to be clearly defined in the Bill
Parenting Focus	Parenting Focus have concerns that the current language, in the bill which requires	Parenting Focus welcome the inclusion of guidance on unfair costs and the requirement for	No Comments on this clause

	schools to "have regard to" the guidance, is too weak. "It creates a duty to consider but not a duty to follow." They are of the view that affordability, flexibility and inclusivity will remain optional for some schools.	reporting but this should be timebound (gave suggestion of every 3 yrs) and be conducted in all schools.	
Menstruation Matters	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	Menstruation Matters advocates for trousers for girls which do not need to be branded. The Blazer and school jumper could have the crest which would reduce cost.
Women's Regional Consortium	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause

	Clause 10	Clause 11	Clause 12
Department of Education	DE explained in clause 10 "schools" referred to grant-aided and independent primary schools and post-primary schools. It also refers to the definitions of "pupil" and "manager", and it cross-references those with the 1986 Order.	DE state Clause 11 simply clarifies that references to "the Department" in the chapter mean the Department of Education.	DE state Clause 12 clarifies that the guidelines will not apply to the providers of education to children under compulsory school age, meaning preschool providers. Compulsory school age is already defined in the 1986 Order.
National Association Of Head Teachers	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause

NICICTU	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	Play based learning should be considered in developing the policy and encouraging schools to provide the appropriate coveralls and other things that are needed. "Early years work is akin to PE in that it requires specialist equipment, so provision for that should probably be included."
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
Retail NI	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
Northern Ireland Youth Assembly	Youth Assembly Members state the Bill should apply to all schools and all children.	No Comments on this clause	Youth Assembly Members want the Bill to apply to all children regardless of age or stage of school. They state that Uniform grants should also apply to pre-school children.
NICCY Youth Forum	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	Apply to all children in all schools
NICCY	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	NICCY cited that children who attend nursery school are eligible to apply for free school meals, but they cannot apply for a uniform grant. The Bill should seek to

			include nursery or preschools.
Diverse Youth NI	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	Diverse Youth think guidelines should be extended to early years/pre-school setting to further help support families.
CMA	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
Parenting Focus	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
Menstruation Matters	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
Women's Regional Consortium	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause

	Clause 13	Clause 14	Clause 15	Clause 16
Department of Education	Clause 13 contains the power for the Department to make regulations to allow school uniform guidelines to apply to preschool education.	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
National Association Of Head Teachers	Should be guidance and not regulation	Guidance should apply to all schools	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
NICICTU	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
Retail NI	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
Northern Ireland Youth Assembly	Youth Assembly Members want the Bill to apply to all children regardless of age or stage of school. They state that Uniform grants should also apply to pre-school children.	Youth Assembly Members want the Bill to apply to all children regardless of age or stage of school. They state that Uniform grants should also apply to pre-school children.	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
NICCY Youth Forum	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
NICCY	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
Diverse Youth NI	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
CMA	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
Parenting Focus	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
Menstruation Matters	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause
Women's Regional Consortium	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause	No Comments on this clause

Clause by Clause Scrutiny of the Bill

79. The Committee had before it final text of 24 amendments, as below.

80. These amendments comprised changes:

- Pursuant to the advice of the Examiner for Statutory Rules and Assembly Legal Services;
- Pursuant to recommendations by statutory partners NIHRC and NICCY, and all gratefully received submissions by youth panellists, unions, and representative bodies of retail, sustainability, competition regulation, equality and rights groups;
- to exact implementation of the affordability provisions of the bill;
- to enhance the rights of pupils to have a say and influence in what they wear;
- to prevent discrimination in school uniform;
- to improve accountability and complaints about uniform sanctions under the bill;
- and to improve access by pupils to the rights safeguarded by UNCRC and UNCRPD.

Links to Appendices

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Appendix 2: Memoranda and Papers from the Department for [Enter the name of the Department]

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Appendix 3: Memoranda and Papers from Others

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Appendix 4: Minutes of Proceedings

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Appendix 5: Minutes of Evidence

[View Minutes of Evidence from evidence sessions related to the report](#)

Appendix 6: Written submissions

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Appendix 7: Research Papers

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