



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

**Committee for Education
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**To: Claire McCanny
NIPSO Bill Adhoc Committee**

**From: Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education**

Date: 2 July 2015

Subject: SEN Redress and the NIPSO

At its meeting on Wednesday 1 July 2015, the Committee for Education was briefed by the Department of Education as part of the Committee Stage of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Bill.

The Committee noted that there are a number of differing avenues for complaint and redress in respect of the health and education aspects of a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and in respect of pre-statement support provided by schools. The Committee heard evidence that the absence of a single redress route sometimes leads to confusion and frustration among parents who are dissatisfied with SEN support.

The Committee agreed to write to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsperson (NIPSO) Adhoc Committee seeking its views on the extent of the proposed powers for the NI Public Service Ombudsperson in the NIPSO Bill in respect of a single redress mechanism for parents who are dissatisfied with Special Educational Need statements and pre-statement school-based support.

A response by mid-September 2015 would be greatly appreciated.

If you require further explanation, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Peter

Peter McCallion
Committee Clerk

From: Paul Gill, Clerk to the Ad Hoc Committee on the Public Services Ombudsperson Bill

Date: 10 September 2015

To: Peter McCallion, Clerk to the Committee for Education

Subject: Single Redress Mechanism for parents dissatisfied with Special Educational Need Statements

At its meeting on the 8 September the Ad Hoc Committee on the Public Services Ombudsperson Bill continued its consideration of the bill and discussed your memo dated 2 July 2015 regarding the above.

The Committee received a briefing from Alyn Hicks who remarked that there is a Special Educational Needs Tribunal and a person has recourse to that body. The Ombudsman would expect them to take that course of action.

The Chair asked Members for any views and comments, none were forthcoming.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Paul Gill

Clerk to the Ad Hoc Committee on the Public Services Ombudsperson Bill