



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Committee for Education

## Minutes of Proceedings

2 March 2022

**Meeting Location:** Teleconference

**Present by Video or Teleconference:**

Mr Chris Lyttle MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr Pat Sheehan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Ms Nicola Brogan MLA  
Mrs Diane Dodds MLA  
Mr Harry Harvey MLA  
Mr Daniel McCrossan MLA  
Mr Justin McNulty MLA

Ms Aoibhinn Treanor (Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Mark McQuade (Assistant Clerk)  
Mr Marcus Matthews (Clerical Supervisor)  
Mr Craig Mealy (Clerical Officer)

**Apologies:**

Mr Robbie Butler MLA  
Mr Robin Newton MBE MLA



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The meeting commenced at 9:19am in public session.

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies as above.

Mr Butler has delegated his vote to Mr Lyttle.

### **2. Chairperson's Business**

#### **2.1 The Period Products (Free Provision) Bill**

The Committee noted a finalised list of amendments to the Period Products (Free Provision) Bill from the Bills sponsor Pat Catney MLA and correspondence from the Minister for Communities indicating that the Department for Communities will act as lead Department for the Period Products (Free Provision) Bill.

#### **2.2 Life and Learning in Lockdown.**

The Chairperson informed members that Assembly Engagement and Education Committee teams had carried out a follow-up event to the Committee's Life and Learning in Lockdown engagement with young people and that mentimeters would follow in due course.

### **3. Draft Minutes**

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the minutes of its meetings held on 23 February.



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### 4. Matters Arising

There were no Matters Arising.

### 5. Correspondence

5.1 The Committee noted an index of correspondence.

5.2 on The Committee noted a response from the Education Authority regarding CO2 monitors and air filtration devices in schools.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Education Authority to ask if the reported number of air filtration units available was adequate to meet the needs of the school estate.

5.3 The Committee noted a response from the Education Authority providing an update on its Communication Strategy.

5.4 The Committee noted correspondence from the Northern Ireland Fiscal Council regarding the publication of a report entitled 'Stakeholder Engagement and Future Work Programme'.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that Committee staff should continue to liaise with the Fiscal Council regarding an oral briefing.

5.5 The Committee noted correspondence from a witness regarding evidence provided to the Committee in an oral briefing on the Period Products (Free Provision) Bill.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the Clerk would solicit the views of Hansard on the briefing and advise the Bill Sponsor.

5.6 - 5.16 The Committee noted correspondence regarding concerns on the Integrated Education Bill.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the correspondents indicating that the Committee Stage of the Bill finished on 24 November 2021 and referring them to the Committee Report on the Bill.



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5.17 The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Education announcing the launch of the COVID-19 Childcare Sustainability Fund for the period 1 January to 31 March 2022.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Minister of Education welcoming the announcement and asking for clarity on support for the childcare sector moving forward into the new financial year.

5.18 The Committee noted correspondence from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission on its draft Strategic Plan 2022-2025.

The Committee discussed a recent announcement from the Minister of Education of 16 new Nurture Groups for primary schools.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write thanking the Minister of Education for this decision.

### **6. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee considered its Forward Work Programme.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed its Forward Work Programme.

### **7. Children and Young People's Strategy - Oral Briefing from the Department of Education**

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

The following witnesses joined the meeting by video conference at 9:35am:

Mr Paul Brush, Director, Youth and Early Years, Department of Education

Mr Paul Wright, Head of Children & Young People's Strategy Team, Department of Education

The witnesses briefed the Committee on the Children & Young People's Strategy.



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This was followed by a question and answer session.

Mr McCrossan left the meeting at 10:07am

Mrs Dodds joined the meeting at 10:15am.

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for the briefing.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to reflect its engagement on the Children & Young People's Strategy in its Legacy report.

## **8. Draft Legacy Report 2017 - 2022**

The Committee considered a draft Committee legacy report for the 2017 – 2022 mandate.

## **9. Any Other Business**

## **10. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting**

The next formal Committee meeting will be held on Thursday 3 March 2022 by video conference at 9:00am.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20am.

**Chris Lyttle MLA**

**Chairperson, Committee for Education  
9 March 2022**