



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Education

Minutes of Proceedings

25 September 2024

Meeting Location: Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Nick Mathison MLA (Chairperson)

Mr David Brooks MLA

Mr Robbie Butler MLA

Mrs Michelle Guy 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

Ms Cara Hunter MLA

Mrs Cathy Mason MLA

The meeting commenced at 2:01 pm in public session.



Northern Ireland Assembly

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr Pat Sheehan and Mr Danny Baker.

2. Chairperson's Business

2.1 The Committee noted a record of an informal meeting with the History Teachers' Association Northern Ireland

2.2 The Committee noted a record of informal meeting with Bright Futures Project PEACHES.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to take further evidence on school governance from the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO), the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO), Department of Education and Education Authority.

2.3 The Committee noted a record of an event examining Links between Poverty and Educational Outcomes for Children and Young People.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to share the record of the event with the Assembly Research and information Service and commission research into best practice anti-poverty measures in education across jurisdictions.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write thanking the participants and seeking their views on further action the Committee could take on this matter.

3. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Matters Arising

The Committee considered a revised draft survey for children and young people on Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE).

Agreed: The Committee agreed the survey as amended.



Northern Ireland Assembly

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Youth Assembly thanking it for its consideration the survey.

5. Minutes of Proceedings

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of its meeting held on 18 September 2024.

Agreed: To move to agenda item 7.

7. Correspondence

7.1 The Committee noted an index and summary note of correspondence.

7.2 The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Education in relation to the timescale of responses from the Education Authority on several pieces of correspondence.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Committee Office would liaise with the Department of Education and Education Authority asking them to notify it via courtesy notes as soon as possible in cases of potential delay.

7.3 The Committee noted Correspondence from the Department of Education providing a budget briefing paper.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to return to this matter at its next meeting.

7.4 The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance regarding Monthly Outturn.

7.5 The Committee noted correspondence from Committee for Finance regarding the Financial Provisions Bill.

7.6 The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance regarding Public Sector Transformation Board proposals.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Education requesting a written briefing on the Public Sector Transformation Board transformation projects, including:



Northern Ireland Assembly

- The interim nature of board;
- Rationale and criteria for selection of bids;
- SEN and teacher professional training bids; and
- The digital landscape review.

7.7 The Committee noted correspondence from Participation and the Practice of Rights (PPR) providing a brief on an Education Authority change in practice on enrolment of children in temporary accommodation.

The Committee agreed to write to EA and TEO seeking a reply as addendum to PPR's previous query.

7.8 The Committee noted a response from the Education Authority providing information on the process adopted to support Children with Special Educational Needs.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to share the response with the individual who raised these issues with it.

7.9 The Committee discussed correspondence from the Department of Education providing the final version of the Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) Action Plan and Definition.

Mr Butler made a declaration of interest that he is a member of the panel for the Executive Programme on Paramilitarism and Organised Crime (EPPOC).

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Education welcoming the joint action plan.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister regarding his meeting with the Loyalist Communities Council (LCC), noting that a range of views had been expressed by Committee members on this matter and asking for a rationale for the meeting and minutes of the meeting.

7.10 The Committee noted is an update on implementation of the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) measures for 2024/25 from the Department of Education.

Agreed: The Committee to return to this matter at its next meeting.

7.11 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from NASUWT to the Minister of Education regarding the Education Authority procurement policy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking to be copied into the response to this correspondence.



Northern Ireland Assembly

8. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered a draft forward work programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed its Forward Work Programme as amended.

9. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 6

The Committee moved to closed session at 2:58pm.

6. Effective Questioning

Training on Effective Questioning was delivered to Committee members by Professor John Sturrock KC

10. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday 2 October 2024 in Room 29, Parliament Buildings at 2:00pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 pm.

Nick Mathison MLA

**Chairperson, Committee for Education
2 October 2024**