



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

Justice Bill

Notice of Withdrawal of Amendments tabled on  
13 April 2026 for Consideration Stage

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*The following amendments tabled by Mr Doug Beattie on 09 February 2026 have now been withdrawn:*

**New Clause**

Before clause 24 insert—

*‘Minimum age of criminal responsibility*

**Minimum age of criminal responsibility**

**A24.** For Article 3 of the Criminal Justice (Children) (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (age of responsibility) substitute—

**“Age of criminal responsibility**

**3.**—(1) Subject to the exceptions in paragraph (2), a child under the age of 12 years shall not be charged with an offence.

(2) A child aged 10 years or over may be charged with murder, attempted murder, manslaughter, rape or assault by penetration.

(3) Nothing in this Article shall prevent the police from interviewing a child under the age of 12 years to seek information in connection with an offence, but only if consent to do so has been provided by a person who has parental responsibility for the child.

(4) The reference to “offence” in paragraph (3) includes any act or omission which, if committed by a person above the age of criminal responsibility, would constitute an offence.”.’

***An amendment to the amendment inserting a new clause “Age of criminal responsibility: review”, tabled by Sian Mulholland on 30 September 2025***

After subsection (1) insert—

‘(1A) The report must include the number of children under the age of 12 years in each year of the review period who have been—

- (a) arrested for an offence listed in Article 3(2) of the Criminal Justice (Children) (Northern Ireland) Order 1998,
- (b) charged with an offence referred to in paragraph (a), or
- (c) convicted of an offence referred to in paragraph (a).’

***An amendment to the amendment inserting a new clause “Age of criminal responsibility: review”, tabled by Sian Mulholland on 30 September 2025***

In subsection (5), leave out “5” and insert “3”.