

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Paul Givan, Minister
Rathgael House, Balloo Road
Bangor, BT19 7PR

Pat Sheehan MLA
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

3 October 2024
AQW 15953/22-27

Pat Sheehan MLA has asked:
the Minister of Education whether he discussed education policies,
including plans to build an Irish Language school in East Belfast, with the
Loyalist Communities Council at their meeting on 24 September 2024.

ANSWER

Mr David Campbell, Chairman of the Loyalist Communities Council, wrote to me in March 2024 requesting a meeting to discuss educational underachievement in loyalist communities. I accepted this invitation, and a meeting was scheduled for July 2024, which was then rearranged for 24 September.

The focus of the meeting was to discuss approaches and programmes to tackle educational underachievement and disadvantage. The meeting lasted around 50 minutes. Before the meeting concluded, the LCC representatives raised concerns about what they perceived as being a lack of community support for an Irish Medium school in East Belfast.

The only action point from the meeting was for officials to share information on the RAISE programme which is intended to take a locality-based approach to raise aspiration and tackle underachievement in areas of disadvantage.

I have placed a copy of the minutes of this meeting in the Assembly library for the attention of members.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul Givan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Paul Givan MLA
Minister of Education



MINISTER'S PRE-BRIEF AND MEETING NOTE

PRE-BRIEF

MEETING

DATE AND TIME OF MEETING:		Tuesday 24 September 2024 – 9:30am	
TITLE/ORGANISATION: [Include INV number where possible and ensure title on re-brief and meeting notes are the same]		Meeting with Loyalist Communities Council to discuss educational underachievement in loyalist communities	
VENUE:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PB	<input type="checkbox"/> Rathgael <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:
LIST OF ATTENDEES: (As follows)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minister		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SpAd:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minister PS <input type="checkbox"/> Minister APS
OFFICIALS:	[REDACTED]		
OTHERS: [include PDF copies of any presentations delivered]	David Campbell Robert Williamson Bobby Rodgers Jackie McDonald		
KEY POINTS DISCUSSED: Educational underachievement in North and West Belfast; absenteeism in schools post-COVID; the RAISE programme; the Fair Start report; Early years interventions; the Bright Sparks programme; the Labour Party election manifesto commitment to provide a mental health worker for every school; David Campbell reported the lack of support for an Irish Medium school in East Belfast which is causing polarity and volatility in the community.			
ISSUES AGREED:			
ACTION POINTS / OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE: [REDACTED] to share details of the RAISE Programme and the names of RAISE Community Engagement Leads with the LCC.			
NOTE WRITTEN BY: [REDACTED]		DATE: 26 September 2024	

Signed and dated by Private Secretary: 26 September 20024

Ministers' clearance: 26/09/2024