
GBA News – Monday 30th June 2025



Review of Northern Ireland Curriculum

The **Strategic Review of the Northern Ireland Curriculum** carried out by Lucy Crehan calls for curriculum reform to better meet the needs of students and society.

The review highlights the need to develop a curriculum that is:

- **Purpose-led:** The curriculum should have a clear vision and align with broader educational goals, focusing on developing young people as individuals, contributors to society, the economy, and the environment, and as lifelong learners.
- **Knowledge-rich:** Emphasises the importance of deep, well-sequenced knowledge as the foundation for all complex thinking skills. This approach ensures all children, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, have access to essential knowledge and skills.
- **Continuous and coherent:** The curriculum should provide a structured framework that ensures seamless progression and logical connections across year groups, subjects, and skills. This helps students build on existing knowledge and skills effectively.

- **Specific and focused:** The curriculum should have clearly articulated objectives and a targeted scope to ensure effective learning. It should outline precisely what students should know and be able to do at each stage, prioritising depth over superficial coverage.
- **Inclusive and flexible:** The curriculum should be adaptable to the diverse needs of learners, schools, and communities. It should allow for contextual flexibility and adjust the pace of delivery to accommodate prior learning, making it more inclusive for all students, including those with special educational needs and those in Irish-medium education.

It emphasises the importance of deep, well-sequenced knowledge and skills, and the need for flexibility to adapt to diverse learners' needs.

Key recommendations contained in the report include:

- **Updating curriculum aims and objectives** to focus on developing capabilities.
- **Introducing a new curriculum framework** organised around subjects and continuous strands.
- **Enhancing early years education** with a unified framework and targeted interventions.
- **Improving transitions** between key stages to ensure continuity and coherence.
- **Making Language and Literacy and Mathematics and Numeracy mandatory** up to age 16.
- **Introducing Digital Technology** as a new curriculum strand.
- **Reconfiguring Learning for Life and Work** to better integrate citizenship, employability, and personal development.

The report also calls for a **Curriculum Taskforce** to oversee implementation, comprehensive resource development, and regular curriculum reviews to keep pace with evolving needs. These changes aim to create a more equitable, relevant, and effective education system for Northern Ireland.

School Governance Survey - Update

Our School Governance Survey was launched on 1 May and closed on 30 May. There were 135 responses submitted, and these focused on many important aspects of school governance. We thank those who took the time to complete the survey as this gave us an invaluable oversight of the views and experiences of our governors. While many reflected positively on their experience and how rewarding they find the role, we learned a lot about the future training needs of our governors and the challenges that they anticipate in the short to medium term. We look forward to sharing the report with you in full at the beginning of the new school year and engaging with governors and school leaders to implement some of the key findings and recommendations.

GBA Summer Closure Dates

Please note that the GBA office will be closed from 5.00 pm on Wednesday 9th July until Tuesday 15th July 2025 (inclusive) to facilitate staff leave.

We will reopen as normal on Wednesday 16th July 2025.

Please note the cut-off date of 12 noon on Wednesday 9th July 2025 for job vacancy advertising requests.

Any requests received after this time will not be processed until 23rd July 2025.

Live Consultations

The Department of Education currently has two consultations open:

- The [16-18 Legislation](#) consultation proposes legislation for all learners to participate in education, apprenticeship or training until age 18. This consultation will close on 4th July 2025
- [Strengthening Inspection Legislation](#) consultation is open until the 10 July 2025. The Department proposes to strengthen the existing statutory framework for inspection of schools and other education and training establishments by making it an offence to intentionally obstruct a person involved in the carrying out of an inspection.

School Uniforms Bill - Update

The *School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Bill* in Northern Ireland has made steady progress through the legislative process since February 2025. Introduced by Education Minister Paul Givan on 18 February 2025, the Bill completed its Second Stage on 3 March 2025 and is currently undergoing scrutiny in the Committee for Education. The Bill aims to make school uniform policies more affordable and inclusive by requiring the Department of Education to issue binding guidelines (these guidelines have yet to be presented to the Committee) to schools. It also proposes to extend eligibility for school clothing allowances provided by the Education Authority.

The Committee has received oral and written evidence from key stakeholders including schools, retailers, young people, trade unions, advocacy groups and other interested parties in recent weeks. All of these groups highlighted the financial strain uniforms place on low-income families.

The Committee will meet on 1 & 2 July to formally discuss the clauses of the bill and their draft and will continue their scrutiny work into the summer recess period.

Shared Education Update

The GBA is engaging with the Shared Education and Sectoral Support team within the EA to support our member schools with ongoing/ future Shared Education work.

Please [contact us](#) with any comments or questions in relation to Shared Education and we will raise these on your behalf.

For the latest Shared Education news, including partnership stories and funding updates, please visit the [EA's Shared Education Hub](#).

Advertising of Teaching and Support roles on the GBA Website

The GBA provides a free advertising service for our member schools. Job vacancies are posted on our website and Twitter page. The Education Authority website also links to the GBA jobs section.

PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR JOB TEMPLATE HAS BEEN UPDATED FOR THE 2024/25 ACADEMIC YEAR AND IS AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD [HERE](#)

If you would like us to host a vacancy for your school, **please [contact us](#), with the completed job template for each post, and allow at least TWO WORKING DAYS for posts to be uploaded.**