



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Conductive Education for Children with Cerebral Palsy – Response from the Minister
Date:	9th April, 2009
Reporting Officer:	Mr. Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (extension 6325)
Contact Officer:	Mr. Jim Hanna, Senior Committee Administrator (extension 6313)

Relevant Background Information

Members will recall that the Committee, at its meeting on 20th February, considered a request from the Mayor of Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council who was seeking support for conductive education for children with cerebral palsy and, in particular, the ongoing funding crises experienced by the Buddy Bear Trust School, located in Dungannon, which was the only educational establishment in Northern Ireland currently delivering that type of education.

The Committee expressed its support for conductive education in general and called on the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister to bring forward as a matter of urgency recommendations for the delivery of conductive education, including financial and physical resources.

Key Issues

A response has been received from the Minister with responsibility for Education (a copy of which is attached).

The Minister has outlined the Department's policy in relation to the funding of independent schools and the provision of funding for children with special educational needs.

In addition, she has indicated that she has met with representatives of the Buddy Bear Trust to discuss funding proposals but, at this stage, none of the options which have been presented are viable.

Resource Implications

There are no Human Resource or financial implications associated with this report.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the receipt of the correspondence.

Decision Tracking

Any decision of the Committee will be implemented following ratification by the Council.
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Officer Responsible - Mr. Jim Hanna, Senior Committee Administrator

Key to Abbreviations

N/A

Documents Attached

Response from Catriona Ruane M.L.A., the Minister with responsibility for the Department of Education.
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