



OMAGH HIGH SCHOOL

14 Crevenagh Road - Omagh - Co. Tyrone - BT79 0EQ

Principal: - Mr C Gaitatzis B.Sc. (Hons.) PGCE, M.B.A.

24 February 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to make you aware of a serious and significant development in education, which will impact on the future of Omagh High School and controlled schools. Currently a private member's bill, the 'Integrated Education Bill', is progressing through the Northern Ireland Assembly, which gives preference to integrated Schools above every other type of school. If this bill is passed, in its current form, it means that integrated schools will have advantages and will benefit from more opportunities for extra places, additional schools and resources including funding. Omagh High School and controlled schools in Northern Ireland will not benefit from this. Details of the bill can be found at

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/legislation/2017-2022-mandate/non-executive-bill-proposals/integrated-education-bill/>.

As you know our school is well established and has been part of our community for many years. It is open to all young people to be educated together as are schools across the controlled sector. There has been no direct consultation with schools, parents or the community. There are a number of different school types in Northern Ireland, and it is important that each type of school has equal access to resources, funding and opportunities and that one school type is not elevated above another. We firmly believe that all children and young people should be educated together. This is happening in Omagh High School and across controlled schools every day. This bill ignores that fact, is inequitable and prioritises one type of school.

Our support body, the Controlled Schools' Support Council, has provided evidence to the Assembly Committee for Education stating the above and continue to talk to individual assembly members and local councillors raising our concerns: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zyi_hpmSV_c. If you share these concerns, we would ask you to do likewise to ensure that all our local Assembly Members (MLAs) are aware of this, as a matter of urgency. The bill reaches its final stages in the Assembly at the end of February. It is important that the wider community is aware of our concerns around the impact of this bill.

At Omagh High School we believe that:

- All children and young people **should be educated together**.
- This happens on a **daily basis** in our school and other controlled schools.
- Controlled schools are **inclusive and diverse**.
- Controlled schools meet the purposes of integrated education in clause 2 of the Bill.
- Controlled schools are **Open to All**.
- The Bill assumes that **only Integrated Schools** are diverse and inclusive.
- The Bill **prioritises** Integrated Schools above all others.
- The Bill will result in controlled schools being **disadvantaged**.
- The amendments made to the Bill **do not go far enough**.

I have attached to this correspondence the email addresses of the MLA's who represent our constituency. Your local Councillors can be found on the Council webpage.

I thank you for taking the time to read my concerns and would encourage you to act if you share them.

Yours faithfully

C Gaitatzis
Principal

Iris Clarke (Mrs)
Chair of Governors

Constituency	Candidate	Party Short	CONTACT
West Tyrone	Nicola Brogan	Sinn Féin	nicola.brogan@mla.niassembly.gov.uk
West Tyrone	Daniel McCrossan	SDLP	daniel.mccrossan@mla.niassembly.gov.uk
West Tyrone	Declan McAleer	Sinn Féin	declan.mcaleer@mla.niassembly.gov.uk
West Tyrone	Maoliosa McHugh	Sinn Féin	maoliosa.mchugh@mla.niassembly.gov.uk
West Tyrone	Thomas Buchanan	DUP	thomas.buchanan@mla.niassembly.gov.uk

Members of Assembly Committee for Education			
Constituency	Candidate	Party Short	CONTACT
Belfast East	Chris Lyttle	Alliance	chris.lyttle@mla.niassembly.gov.uk
Belfast East	Robin Newton	DUP	robin.newton@mla.niassembly.gov.uk
Belfast West	Pat Sheehan	Sinn Féin	pat.sheehan@mla.niassembly.gov.uk
Lagan Valley	Robbie Butler	UUP	robbie.butler@mla.niassembly.gov.uk
Newry and Armagh	Justin McNulty	SDLP	justin@mcnulty@mla.niassembly.gov.uk
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West Tyrone	Nicola Brogan	Sinn Féin	nicola.brogan@mla.niassembly.gov.uk
West Tyrone	Daniel McCrossan	SDLP	daniel.mccrossan@mla.niassembly.gov.uk