



## **Irish Primary Principals' Network (IPPN) Statement**

1. Education (Amendment) Bill 2015
2. General Scheme of an Education (Parent & Student Charter) Bill 2016
  1. IPPN considers the establishment of an Ombudsman for Education to be unnecessary and sees no evidence or justification for an additional oversight layer within the education sector. The current office of the Ombudsman for Children works both collaboratively and effectively with schools and professional organisations in representing the voice of children and encourages schools to have robust and effective policies and practices in place to promote the welfare and rights of children. The provisions of the Education (Parent & Student Charter) Bill as outlined will strengthen the current role of the Ombudsman for Children and in doing so eliminates the necessity to establish an Ombudsman for Education.
  2. IPPN welcomes and supports the provision of a Parent & Student Charter – with a focus on fostering the culture of change within school communities to prevent grievances from arising. Schools currently work collaboratively with parents and pupils to promote the welfare and rights of children, and welcome the setting out in law of Principles of Engagement with Students & Parents. Current procedures used to address Parental Complaints in schools have been agreed by Management Bodies and Unions. However, these procedures are not underpinned by legislation and have in the past been widely interpreted often giving rise to confusion and conflict. Schools will require significant assistance in drafting individual Parent & Student Charters as the interpretation of the bill could lead to a variety of interpretations of the elements as outlined in the legislation. The complimentary role of the Parent & Student Charter with the School Self Evaluation model is viewed as positive and welcomed by IPPN.