

INFORMATION ON PAUL GIVAN'S VISIT TO ISRAEL

Overview

- Paul Givan visited Israel as part of a delegation invited by the Israeli Embassy to the United Kingdom in London. A copy of the invitation is provide below.
- The purpose of the visit was to gain insight into Israel's cultural, social, and political landscape.
- The visit was not an official Department of Education trip, nor was it framed as one. It therefore did not require departmental approvals.

Funding and organisation

- No departmental funds were used.
- All costs (travel, accommodation, insurance) were covered by the Israeli Embassy.
- The costs are available on the NI Assembly's Register of Members' Interests: <https://aims.niassembly.gov.uk/mlas/registerofinterests.aspx>
- The Israeli Embassy handled all planning, including booking travel, arranging insurance and organising the itinerary. Paul Givan received a draft itinerary on the day of departure, 23 October 2025.
- Departmental involvement was limited to administrative tasks in the Minister's Private Office:
 - Confirming attendance and seeking clarification on whether the visit would include any educational components. Confirmation of educational components was not received in advance of departure.
 - Confirming travel logistics.
 - Managing the Minister's diary.
 - Securing IT security clearance for Minister's devices.
- No departmental advice or briefing materials were sought or provided.
- No discussions took place with the Executive Office or the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in advance of the visit.
- No departmental officials attended any part of the trip, in person or remotely.
- The Paul Givan did not receive any gifts.

Visit to Ofek School

- Departmental involvement began only after a school visit on 27 October, when:
 - The Minister requested a press release about the school visit.
 - Press Office drafted the release and sent it to the Permanent Secretary for clearance. It was also cleared by the Special Adviser and the Minister.

- The content was checked for compliance with Civil Service standards (factual, impartial, relevant to portfolio).
- It was concluded that the release was a factual account and appropriate to issue.
- Social media posts were generated from the press release in line with standard practice.

The press release was judged to:

- Contain no political content.
- Be factual and relevant to Minister's portfolio.
- Not breach Civil Service Code or communications guidance.

Functioning of Government Act 2021

The Functioning of Government Act 2021 imposes two key obligations:

- Permanent Secretary must ensure arrangements and written records for relevant meetings.
- Ministers must take reasonable steps to have a Civil Servant attend meetings with third parties on official business.

A "relevant meeting" refers to a pre-arranged meeting for official business.

In the case of the visit to Israel:

- No educational visits or meetings were confirmed before Paul Givan's trip to Israel.
- The itinerary was received by Paul Givan on the day of departure. It mentioned an education engagement "to be confirmed" and Paul Givan was unaware of specifics before visiting the Ofek school.
- Consequently, no official attended the visit to Ofek school and attendance was not reasonably possible in this context.
- Paul Givan visited one school.

Key Conclusions

- Departmental involvement was minimal, administrative and aligned with standard protocols.
- No officials accompanied the Minister and no departmental resources were used for the trip itself.
- The press release was cleared based on standards of factual accuracy, impartiality and transparency.
- Based on available information, the Minister's engagements did not trigger legal requirements for official records or civil servant attendance.

Paul Givan addressed his trip to Israel on pages 16 and 42-48 of the Official Hansard Report dated Monday 3 November 2025. This is available [here](#)



15th September 2025

Dear Mr. Givan,

As part of an exclusive group of devolved government leaders, we would like to invite you to a delegation to Israel from the **24th to the 31st of October, 2025**.

This visit offers a valuable opportunity to engage directly with policymakers, senior government officials, civil society leaders and community representatives in order to gain insight into the country's diverse cultural, social and political landscape.

The itinerary includes visits to both the northern and southern regions of Israel, as well as Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, in order to experience the country's distinctive cultural, innovative and historical heritage.

At a time when the region is at the centre of global attention, this delegation offers the chance to look beyond the headlines and to hear from a variety of voices from across the political spectrum.

The costs of this visit would be covered and it would be our pleasure if you could join us.

If you are interested in taking part in this delegation or have any questions, please email [REDACTED] by the 22nd September.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Kind regards,

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Israel