



General Teaching Council
for Northern Ireland

General Teaching Council for NI

termtalk

The Official Newsletter of the General Teaching Council November 07

termtalk



Welcome to the latest edition of **termtalk**, the termly magazine from the Council, which I hope you will find both relevant and stimulating.

In previous editions we have sought to highlight the impact of 'change' on teachers' practice and to examine and evaluate pertinent educational and professional issues. This edition continues this approach through the inclusion of an article, opposite, by Gavin Boyd, Chief Executive (Designate) of the ESA and through a specific section of **termtalk** examining the issue of 'assessment'.

In October the Council assumed responsibility for the 'approval of qualifications' for those entering the profession; this, alongside the publication of the Council's competence document, 'Teaching: the Reflective Profession', represents a significant development. The teaching profession, through its professional body, is now in the position, to determine what knowledge, skills and qualities are required in order to practise as a teacher in Northern Ireland.

Eddie McArdle

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ESA – An Opportunity for Change



Caitriona Ruane (Minister for Education), Gavin Boyd (CEO Designate, ESA) and Will Haire (Permanent Secretary, DE)

Change is happening

In July of this year the NI Executive gave their backing to plans put forward by the Minister for Education, Caitriona Ruane, to progress the Review of Public Administration (RPA) in education and establish the Education and Skills Authority (ESA), by April 2009 at the latest.

This strong political commitment at the highest level made it clear – change is definitely going ahead.

In the coming months legislation will go before the Assembly to allow for establishment of the new organisation. And more immediately, the Minister has asked me to develop and lead a 'Convergence Programme', bringing together the services of the existing

organisations and laying the foundations for ESA. This Convergence Programme includes ICT, human resources, finance, procurement and the planning and development of regional arrangements for the delivery of education support services.

Making a difference

The RPA isn't simply a shuffling of bureaucrats. The aim is to improve educational outcomes for all our young people. Teachers are the people who will make that change happen. My job, and the job of all involved in the creation of ESA, is to ensure that you have the tools and resources to do so.

In practice that will mean freeing-up resources from back office functions and redirecting them to frontline

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GTCNI - a new voice for teachers

ESA – An Opportunity for Change

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services, developing high quality accessible training and support tailored to meet the needs of individual schools, and joined-up planning to deliver modern and well equipped schools in the places where they are needed.

Maintaining ethos

The Department of Education has made clear that ethos is determined, not by ownership, but by Boards of Governors and principals in individual schools. Under the new arrangements schools will be able to determine and maintain their own distinctive ethos.

The Department has also emphasised its desire to empower schools

through the policy of maximised supported autonomy. In delivering this policy, I will be doing what I can to ensure maximum decision making authority and resources are devolved to those schools that want more autonomy, allowing school leaders the flexibility to identify and meet local needs and priorities according to their particular circumstances.

Willing to engage

Since taking up post in February, I have actively sought formal and informal feedback from school principals on the establishment of the ESA. On every occasion I have been encouraged by their willingness to

provide constructive comment and share expertise on the sort of education service that is needed.

I am committed to continuing this dialogue and look forward to hearing the views of more principals and teachers in the months ahead.

The creation of the ESA brings with it a once in a generation opportunity to change education administration for the better. Let's not miss that opportunity.

For more information about the ESA go to: www.esani.org.uk

New Responsibilities for the Council



The Education (NI) Order 2006 conferred, on the Council, significant new responsibilities in respect of 'approval of qualifications'. On the 19th of October 2007 the Council assumed responsibility for approving the qualifications of all those wishing to join the profession and work as teachers in Northern Ireland's grant-aided schools.

Previously, this 'approval' work had been carried out by the Department of Education, but the Council, as the

professional body for teachers and in common with other professional regulators, is now in the position to determine what are the appropriate teaching qualifications which can lead to admission to the Council's Register of Teachers.

These new arrangements have been confirmed by the Department in the GTCNI (Approval of Qualifications) Regulations (NI) 2007 and in the recently issued Circulars 2007/21 and 2007/22.

In effect, the Council will act as the single point of contact for teachers seeking registration and approval of qualifications. The Council's Registration Team have developed new processes to deal with applications to register, and will be handling applications from teachers educated/trained in Northern Ireland, the UK, EU/EEA countries and the 'Rest of the World'. More information regarding registration can be found on the Council's website: www.gtcni.org.uk



GTCNI Notice Board



BritishRedCross

The British Red Cross Humanitarian Education Team provides training and teaching resources to support the delivery of local and global citizenship, in line with the revised curriculum.

Thirty teachers from schools throughout Northern Ireland participated in the British Red Cross Teacher's certificate in Humanitarian Education during 2006 – 2007. Topics such as the work of the Red Cross movement, refugees and asylum seekers, disasters and emergencies and conflict were explored through the use of active learning methodologies.

The course will run again from October and will be accredited to OCN level 3.

The British Red Cross is also offering free in-service training for secondary schools. For further information contact Orla Devine at odevine@redcross.org.uk or 028 90 246400.

Teaching: the Reflective Profession

The Council launched 'Teaching: the Reflective Profession' on 15th June 2007, which incorporates the new Northern Ireland teacher competences. The publication and accompanying advice on PRSD will shortly be distributed to all teachers in Northern Ireland.

Get into the ARRTS

You will also find enclosed with this **termtalk** a leaflet explaining how to 'logon' to the valuable research repository for teachers ARRT Space. Take a minute to go online and see what research articles are relevant to you and your area of work. <http://arrts.gtcni.org.uk>

Amending Your Details

Moved House? Got Married? Changed Job? If you have, the Registration Team would like the opportunity to update your details on the Register of Teachers. For your convenience we have included an 'Amendment Form' which can be found behind the 'cover sheet' of this **termtalk** mailing. Simply complete the form and return it to the Council for the necessary amendments to be made. Please remember to attach a copy of your marriage certificate if you would like us to change your name.

Conference at Queen's

Make a note in your diary for Saturday 24 November 2007, 10.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.

at Queen's University Belfast. A conference, '**A' Level English Language: A Northern Ireland Syllabus?** is taking place and the invited guest speakers are: Adrian Beard, Angela Goddard, Graeme Trousdale, and Adeline Dinsmore, OBE.

For more information contact the organisers: Prof. Paul Simpson and Dr John Kirk School of English, Queen's University Belfast

Email: p.simpson@qub.ac.uk or j.m.kirk@qub.ac.uk



Queen's
University
Belfast

Do you teach Mathematics?

You may be interested to learn that the 11th International Congress on Mathematical Education is taking place in Mexico in 2008. The Joint Mathematical Council of the UK is arranging for a showcase of UK practice at the conference and they are keen to have representatives from N. Ireland. Visit: <http://icme11.org/> for further details.



A new website called Ur Zone has been launched, by the Community Safety Branch of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, containing information on topics ranging from Staying Safe Online, Identity Theft and Safe Relationships through to Bullying, Drugs and Young People and the Law.

The site is primarily aimed at young people. However, for teachers – particularly teachers of Citizenship – there are information sheets, worksheets and links to sites which will provide helpful material for the classroom.

Assessment: Policy and Practice

The roll out of the revised curriculum continues this year and it is likely that schools will be evaluating their own assessment arrangements and policies. In the article that follows Professor John Gardner of the School of Education at Queen's University provides many thought provoking insights into the role of teachers in assessment. Following this is an article by Nuala Artt from CCEA describing the role of assessment for learning in the revised curriculum. It is hoped the inclusion of these articles will stimulate professional discussion on the complex area of assessment and help teachers and schools evaluate their current arrangements and policies.

Is Teaching a Partial Profession?

This is an abridged version of an article of the same title that first appeared in the Summer issue of *Make the Grade*. The inclusion here is with the kind permission of the Institute of Educational Assessors, www.ioea.org.uk

This paper tackles a thorny issue – the role of teachers in assessment. For some it may be a surprise to hear this role categorised as problematic. However, the dependence in many countries on huge state-wide systems of external testing as opposed to assessments by teachers suggests that something is missing. What might it be? Well arguably doctors have it. Architects also have it. Even lawyers have it! What appears to be missing is public trust.

The majority of people accept the expertise and judgment of accredited doctors and lawyers. Likewise, the majority of the public are content about the quality of the teaching provided by teachers in schools. But if teachers do enjoy our confidence in the context of teaching, why do we depend so much on externally-administered tests to assess the results of their teaching, that is, their students' learning? Surely assessment is as much a part of teaching as it is of learning. Do we bat an eyelid at university teachers judging the performance of their own students? No, at least not to any significant extent. Yet, I would argue that it is not an uncommon reaction for many people – for example, political groups, parents' groups and even other teachers – to criticise teachers' judgements and their

assessment of learning outcomes. Many simply consider teachers' judgments to be 'partial', i.e. subject to bias.

There is clearly much more public faith in the 'objectivity' of external tests than in the potential subjectivity (partiality!) of teachers in making assessments of learning. All forms of distrust exist. Teachers may mark too generously because they do not want to disappoint their students. Or they mark too lowly as they 'cash in stamps' against pupils who have given them bother during the year. They might even mark over the odds because it makes the school look better. Many such claims swirl in the general milieu of distrust of teacher assessments of students' work but it has to be said, there is an element of truth in them. There is research evidence of bias in teachers' assessments, including well-behaved girls being graded higher than badly-behaved boys for the same quality of work. Students with special needs may be marked at lower or higher levels because of low expectations or even sympathy, respectively. Similarly students' perceived 'ability' may cause some teachers to score them lower than they should because they have a fixed notion of their level of performance. But research also shows that bias and error may be



Professor John Gardner.

significantly reduced or even corrected by a combination of training and moderation. There is also evidence that involving teachers in developing and setting criteria can be a considerable factor in reducing bias and error.

There are some very likely and important reasons as to why assessment expertise of any significant level is so limited in the teaching profession. One is that it is simply not required, nor indeed covered in most teacher education programmes! Another is that many teachers simply do not see the assessment of their pupils as a part of their role. In truth, however, a considerable degree of assessment by teachers, if only for internal purposes, is carried out in schools. Whether such assessment is carried out well is a moot point, given my argument on assessment expertise above.

The predominance of standardised and external tests arguably implies

Assessment: Policy and Practice



that government simply does not trust teachers' assessments. We can be generous and explain that such government dependence on testing arises from a need to assure students, their parents, universities and potential employers, that not so much as a whisper of subjectivity creeps in to spoil the objective reliability of externally-driven assessment. Less generously, England, alone among the four nations of the UK, remains a bastion of the misuse of students' test results to make schools accountable. However, there are serious concerns over the costs and reliability of external testing. Just recently the Association of College and School Leaders claimed that its research showed that many schools were spending more on examination fees than on learning resources, and that costs for examinations had risen 51% in the last three years.

PriceWaterhouseCoopers has modelled the examinations system in England (ranging across all external

tests: GCSE, A-Level, key stage tests and the International Baccalaureate) and reported that in the 2003-04 year, £370 million was spent on direct costs with an additional £240 million on time costs, but excluding teachers' and lecturers' time in the assessment activities themselves. There were also huge environmental costs with the distribution to test centres of 4.2 million test papers, 80,000 packages and 237 million A4 sheets. Northern Ireland clearly has a much smaller costs footprint but proportionately the same effects would be felt by schools (and the environment!).

While the costs may give cause for concern, the main stimulus for such a huge investment in external testing is its perceived reliability. What, then, if I was to suggest that external tests are not as reliable as the confidence invested in them implies? For example, in 2006, 65,000 GCSE results were appealed and 14,305 were re-graded. This might be explained as being a small percentage of the huge

number of individual examinations taken (6.5 million) but each one of them was the result of individuals querying one of their test results. The obvious implication is that the grading was not reliable for them. How many other students might have been mis-graded?

Research shows that this can be an astonishing 30% in high-stakes 11+ testing in Northern Ireland (Gardner and Cowan, Queen's), 57% in California's Grade 2 mathematics (Rogosa, Stanford) and up to 40% in key stage 3 tests in England (Black and Wiliam, King's College). I must (hastily) qualify these figures by dispelling the notion that they are solely a result of incompetence on the part of examination bodies or their markers, though some may be. Primarily they are a part of a natural systemic problem in which the difference between a student's 'observed' score (on the day) and the predicted 'true' score, if the test was to be repeated on many occasions, causes a

Assessment: Policy and Practice



misclassification. This 'standard error of measurement' will contrive always to ensure that no test can be completely reliable.

Despite all this, the public and the teaching community themselves maintain a high level of trust in external testing while concerns persist that teachers' summative assessments are not sufficiently 'accurate' to be acceptable. However, there is evidence that teacher assessment and external assessment can be comparable to each other in outcome terms. Durant, for example has compared the results for English, mathematics and science in Worcestershire schools at key stage 2 (1995-2002) and key stage 3 (1997-2002). He found that within one level there is almost total agreement (98-100%) between teacher and external assessments, and that in direct comparison there is 76% and 62% agreement for key stage 2 and 3 respectively.

The question then arises, can teacher assessment be made more reliable

than is suggested by the doubts cast against it? The answer here is a resounding 'Yes'. The Assessment Reform Group pamphlet: *The Role of Teachers in Assessment* (available on the GTCNI ARRTS site, <http://arrts.gtcni.org.uk>) presents the pros and cons for teachers' summative assessment, drawing on relevant research and the experiences of teachers' summative assessment in Queensland, California and across the UK. The recommendations for ensuring that assessment by teachers is dependable include:

- participation of teachers in setting criteria that include levels of progression in learning;
- professional development to ensure the application of procedures is consistent and that bias is avoided;
- moderation procedures that both assure the accuracy and validity of judgements and which

engage the teachers in the sharing of interpretations and understanding of criteria;

- the provision of a bank of resource tasks with associated criteria to support teachers (but not to be used as separate measures or to confirm teachers' judgments); and
- the provision of time for teachers to develop their summative assessment competence and practice.

Can the partial profession, therefore, be made more complete? Well of course it can. If the resources are made available to increase assessment expertise through initial teacher education and continuing professional development. Most importantly, for public confidence, instances of bias and error need to be controlled through focused professional development and moderation.

Assessment for Learning and the Northern Ireland Curriculum

Nuala Artt, Principal Officer CCEA

This year, many teachers will be involved in the implementation of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. In preparation for this, teachers will have been given opportunities for professional development in a number of key areas to support the revised curriculum and assessment framework. The practice of 'assessment for learning' represents one such area which CCEA regards as an integral part of the teaching and learning process and a cornerstone of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

What is Assessment for Learning?

The use of assessment information in a formative way to inform future teaching and learning is not a new idea. It is what effective teachers have always done and will continue to do. The benefits to learning from good practice in formative assessment have always been apparent in classrooms and have also long been acknowledged within educational literature (for example, Crooks, 1988; TGAT, 1988; Sadler, 1989; Gipps, 1994). More recently, the most notable influences on the development of policy and practice

for the Northern Ireland Curriculum have been the works of Black and Wiliam (1998a, 1998b, 2002, 2003) and the Assessment Reform Group (ARG).

The ARG (2002) has defined assessment for learning (the more accessible term for formative assessment) as:

“

... the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers, to identify where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there.

”



Assessment: Policy and Practice

Within this simple definition lies a complex range of interactions between the teacher and the pupil, which for some, may require a shift in classroom methodology, beliefs in learning and assessment processes. In developing the '10 Principles', as summarised below, the ARG have provided a means for teachers to access the qualities of assessment for learning for use and adaptation within their own classroom practice and learning contexts.

Assessment for learning:

- is part of effective planning;
- focuses on how students learn;
- is central to classroom practice;
- is a key professional skill;
- is sensitive and constructive;
- fosters motivation;
- promotes understanding of goals and criteria;
- helps learners' know how to improve;
- develops the capacity for self-assessment; and
- recognises all educational achievement (ARG, 2002).

Assessment for Learning Strategies

Generic strategies in assessment for learning publications such as the Black and William Black Box pamphlets (1998; 2002) have also provided practical and accessible inroads for teachers to explore techniques for assessment for learning within professional development programmes, such as those provided by CASS. In addition, Shirley Clarke's package of specific techniques (sharing learning intentions and success criteria; effective questioning; feedback; peer and self-assessment and self evaluation) (Clarke 2001; 2003) have also featured as common elements in assessment for learning training for teachers.

The Challenges

As teachers across Northern Ireland now look to build upon current good practice in assessment, many will be

experimenting with a range of assessment for learning techniques to suit their own learning contexts. The skills developed by pupils from the use of a number of the popular assessment for learning strategies will also support some of the statutory components of the curriculum, such as Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding at primary, and Learning for Life and Work at Key Stage 3.

At the same time, teachers will also be developing their capacity to deliver on the statutory assessment arrangements set for 2009/10, when each pupil in Years 3 to 10 will be assessed annually in each of the cross-curricular skills (Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT). Although summative in nature, these teacher-based judgements will require assessment evidence from a broad range of learning activities to provide a clear picture of progress and to inform the next steps. It is in this way that assessment for learning and the summative functions of assessment can be seen to come together to provide useful information about pupil learning. Further training to

support teachers with these assessment requirements will be provided for teachers over the next two years.

The introduction of the computer-based assessment tool InCAS (Interactive Computerised Assessment System) for use in Years 4 to 7 also represents a commitment from CCEA and DE to the use of assessment information to inform future teaching and learning. The use of the InCAS tool early in the school year for diagnostic and formative purposes also lends support to the assessment for learning agenda.

If the aim of the Northern Ireland Curriculum is "to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible choices throughout their lives" CCEA (2007), we might now consider how good practice in assessment for learning can help us to achieve this aim and empower our pupils to be successful, independent, lifelong learners.

For more information about assessment for learning please contact: Nuala Artt, Principal Officer CCEA

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F. +44 (0) 28 90 261234

E. nartt@ccea.org.uk

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Clarke, S. (2001) *Unlocking Formative Assessment. Practical strategies for enhancing pupils' learning in the primary classroom*, London, Hodder Murray

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Prof John's WebSights

A regular feature book-marking educational resource and information websites:
this issue focuses on e-assessment on the Internet



Hot Potatoes <http://hotpot.uvic.ca/>

The famous Hot Potatoes supports creation of interactive multiple-choice, short-answer, jumbled-sentence, crossword, matching/ordering and gap-fill exercises. Free of charge for those in schools who make their pages available online.



www.halfbakedsoftware.com/quandary.php

Less well known is Quandary, an authoring tool for Web-based Action Mazes. A free demo lets you try out examples – the learner is presented with a situation and a number of courses of action. Working through this branching tree supports problem-solving, diagnosis, procedural training, and surveys/quizzes. Examples on tinyurl.com/ywxjm4



www.yacapaca.com

Yacapaca is a brilliant new tool to create quizzes, surveys and tests, set and mark class work with a few mouse clicks, and share and improve what and how to assess. It comes highly recommended by Aidan McCanny and Averil Morrow of the SELB ICT Advisory Service. Sign up as a teacher and click 'assignments' to see the growing coverage. For example, select ICT and scroll down to the SELB logo to find their essential ICT skills quiz. (And click to www.selbictnews.blogspot.com for more of their web recommendations).



www.surveymonkey.com

For more sophisticated surveys, go to Survey Monkey – "intelligent survey software for primates of all species." With free basic level use, anyone can create professional surveys, publish them online, collect and analyse results quickly and easily.



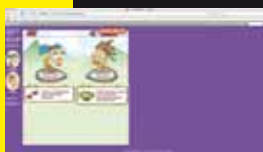
www.shambles.net

... takes you to one of the best collections of assessment resources. Supporting the international school communities, Shambles is becoming known for its comprehensive resource links for all kinds of online educational resources. www.shambles.net/assessment/ will keep you busy for months!



www.ictopus.org.uk

If you are a primary teacher you might want to subscribe free to ICTopus which promises weekly lesson plans, online resources, news and a regular downloadable magazine called 'Sharing Good Practice'. Try out sample puzzles under **Resources > lessons2go**



BBC Bitesize

Provides rapid feedback to learners wanting to test themselves on a whole range of topics. For example, www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks1bitesize/ gives very quick feedback on literacy and numeracy skills.



Handheld Student Response Systems

Often referred to as voting devices, sometimes combined with an interactive whiteboard, these allow teachers to carry out whole class assessment, polls and surveys easily and to respond quickly by adjusting their teaching. www.qwizdom.co.uk is a Northern Ireland-based distributor. See tinyurl.com/37ujlu for a Belfast school case-study.



www.teachertube.com

Let me introduce you to TeacherTube: an American site chock full of videos of teaching ideas. See this 30-second geography film tinyurl.com/2r4e3s as an example of pupils making digital videos to create 'riddle movies' around any topic – animals, famous people, countries, whatever – a simple idea of using digital video to learn.



www.teachers.tv

Back in the UK, Teachers' TV's web-channel is another superb professional resource on almost everything. This programme www.teachers.tv/video/5431 looks at radical developments in assessment which could change the face of teaching and learning: using mobile phones to test pupils when they choose; abandoning the idea of giving numerical scores to work; and even letting students know exam questions in advance.

If you'd like to share your favourite websites on this, or any, educational theme, please email the links and your comments to profjohn@gtni.org.uk

A New Council

A new Council has been in place since November 2012. This issue features 'feature articles' introducing 12 more members of the Council.

John Kerr

Member of the General Purpose and Finance Committee (Elected Member: Primary School Representative)



John Kerr has been teaching in St Kieran's Primary School for 19 years and has experience of teaching in both Key Stages. He completed his MA Education with the Open University in: Assessment and Planning, Management in Action and Leading Professional Development.

In St Kieran's Primary School he successfully introduced and developed the process of self-evaluation in order to monitor, evaluate and develop whole-school literacy. He has also introduced and developed training for the classroom assistants in reading with the Reading Partnership Programme.

Thea Patton

Member of the Registration Committee (Elected Member: Primary School Representative)



Thea Patton has been a Primary School teacher for thirty years having worked in Belfast, Dungannon and Ballykelly where she currently teaches Primary Five.

She is the Ulster Teacher's Union representative in her school and is also a member of the Central Executive Committee of the U.T.U.

Thea was elected to the General Teaching Council in 2002 and was a member of the Registration Committee during the first Council.

Teresa Graham

Chair of the Audit Committee (Elected Member: Secondary School Representative)



Teresa has been teaching for 29 years. She is a teacher at Hazelwood College and an Executive Member of the Belfast Association of NASUWT, Secretary of Women's Committee of ICTU and Secretary of The Lower Ballynafeigh Residents Association.

She is keenly interested in women's issues, particularly involving women in education and is interested in all sports, reading and is a keen recreational walker.

Dr Theo Laverty

Member of the Policy Committee (Elected Member: Secondary School Representative)



Currently, Theo is Head of Chemistry and Examinations Officer at the Dominican College, Portstewart and the past President of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, N. Ireland. He is also a National Executive member of ATL and represents ATL on the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council, and he is a member of the Northern Ireland Teachers' Pensions Consultative Committee. For almost the last 20 years he has acted as a Chief Examiner and the Principal Examiner for CCEA in Chemistry and has been involved in writing and reviewing science specifications for Key Stages 3 and 4. Recently, he has been involved in writing the specification of a revised Single Award Science for the 21st Century.

Damian Walls

Member of the General Purpose and Finance Committee (Elected Member: Secondary School Representative)



Damian Walls has been a teacher and an active member of Derry City Branch of the INTO for thirty years, working as the staff representative in St. Columb's College since 1981. He is a District delegate to both the Northern and All-Ireland Standing Orders Committees. He is also an INTO delegate to Derry Trades Council which he chaired for the last four years, and a panel member of the Northern Ireland Industrial Tribunal. He is Chairperson of the Ulster Schools Chess Federation.

Ivan Arbuthnot

Member of the General Purpose and Finance Committee (Elected Member: Secondary School Principal Representative)



Ivan has been a principal for 18 years; during this time his school has grown and transformed its status into a Controlled Integrated 11-18 College. Ivan has already served 4 years on the first GTCNI Council. He values and appreciates what the Council can do for the profession. He also feels that the GTCNI has the potential to shape and influence education and educational trends in Northern Ireland at a very crucial time.

At present he is on a part-time secondment funded by DE to NICIE working in schools across Northern Ireland developing the Entitlement Curriculum (E2S) in post-primary schools.

Council in Place

November 2006 and this is the final of three
Council members to termtalk readers

Peter Scott

Chair of the Registration Committee (Appointed Member: Northern Ireland Teachers' Council)



Peter Scott has taught French to all levels for twenty-nine years in the post primary sector. His roles in school have included Head of Modern Languages, Sixth Form Tutor, ICT Co-ordinator, teacher responsible for Records of Achievement and member of the Board of Governors.

Peter has been NASUWT National Executive Member for Northern Ireland for over eight years and is currently Vice-Chair of the NASUWT National Education Committee and also a member of the National Post-16 Committee.

Peter was first appointed to the Council in 2002 and has served as Chair of the Registration Committee since then.

He has a particular interest in the 14-19 Agenda and its implications in terms of qualifications and the future organisation of the education service.

John Colgan

Member of the Policy Committee (Appointed Member: Council for Catholic Maintained Schools)



John is a former School Principal and an adviser with SELB and senior adviser with CCMS. He is a former member of NITEC (N. Ireland Teacher Education Committee) and CEPD.

He is currently Vice-Chair of the Board of Governors, Knockevin Special School, Downpatrick and is a Tutor with the Regional Training Unit for the PQH programme. He is also Chair of the Board of Trustees for Mediation N. Ireland.

La'Verne Montgomery

Member of the General Purpose and Finance Committee (Appointed Member: Council for Catholic Maintained Schools)



La'Verne Montgomery began her career in Human Resources in 1994 in the Clothing and Textile Industry and has subsequent experience in various private sector organisations. Her move to the public sector came with her appointment to CCMS in 2002.

She has been Head of Human Resources and Corporate Services since February 2002. Among her responsibilities are the co-ordination of all aspects of the human resources function, and the development and management of a range of corporate services.

La'Verne is currently a member of the Teachers' Salaries Negotiating Committee, leading the negotiations on many aspects of teachers' terms and conditions of service.

Dr Wilfred Mulryne

Vice-Chair of the General Purpose and Finance Committee (Appointed Member: Governing Bodies Association)



Dr Mulryne was Head of Department and Head of Boarding at Methodist College Belfast for 13 years and the Principal for 18 years. He was previously the Headmaster at The Royal School Armagh for 10 years.

He was Chair of the Curriculum and Assessment Committee and Examiner and Moderator at GCSE (O level) and A level with NISEAC including Syllabus development. He sits on various Councils and Committees including the University of Ulster Council since 2004 and the GBA Executive Committee since 1982. He is the Chief Commissioner of NI Scout Association. He was awarded the Allianz Award for services to education in 2005.

Dorothy Black

Member of the Registration Committee (Appointed member: Department of Education)



Dorothy Black, is a Lecturer in the School of Education, University of Ulster and Course Director of the Post Graduate Certificate in Education for Home Economics. She is responsible for subsidiary studies in Personal and Social Education and Education for Employability.

Her research interests include student teachers attitudes to delivering an effective curriculum. Her previous position as Assistant Principal Officer with the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum and Assessment, (CCEA) and presently as a member of CCEA Council and its Curriculum Committee has given her the opportunity to be fully engaged in the review and development of a curriculum.

Brendan McConville

Member of the Registration Committee (Appointed member: Department of Education)



Brendan has been involved in the education service for 29 years and has wide and varied experience in dealing with the development, management and challenges of all types of schools.

He has spent his entire professional career in education, studying at St Joseph's and St Mary's Teacher Training Colleges, Belfast, as a mature student to acquire experience and a qualification in Special Education before taking up the post of Vice-Principal of Gibson House Special School. He then became the Education Officer with the Southern Education and Library Board.

Brendan was a founder member and is Chairman of the Buddy Bear Trust, a registered charity for children with physical disabilities. The 'Trust' promotes the use of 'conductive education'.

An overview of the

In this section of *fermtalk* Katherine Jelly of the Belfast Education and Library Board provides an overview of the Induction and Early Professional Development processes.



Katherine Jelly, Assistant Advisory Officer (For Primary Beginning Teachers), BELB.

Introduction

Teaching is both a privilege and a challenge. To become the best teachers we can we need to be able to reflect on our practice, understand the complex learning and teaching process and be prepared to try new ways of working to enhance the experiences of our pupils.

The Induction and EPD programme offers teachers the opportunity to develop their critical reflective practice and builds on the work undertaken during initial teacher education. Throughout the Induction and EPD phases you will have the opportunity to attend courses, meet other teachers at the same stage and receive valuable support from your teacher-tutor, school and Education and Library board (ELB) staff.

The new competences underpin the induction and EPD process.

INDUCTION

Induction is the first stage of professional development after you qualify to teach. It involves developing your classroom practice and reflective skills and learning from personal experiences. The teacher-tutor plays a valuable role in supporting you during

this time and the courses provided by the ELBs give the opportunity to explore your development with other teachers at the same stage and also with the CASS officers.

Career Entry profile

The Career Entry Profile (CEP) provides an important record of your strengths and development needs as you enter the teaching profession. It can form the basis of the initial discussions with your teacher-tutor and principal to identify areas for your professional development and a foundation from which to build. The CEP is your responsibility and should influence the areas you will develop through your induction period.

Induction Action Plans

You will be asked to complete 2 action plans during induction, based on discussions with your teacher-tutor. Each action plan focuses on one aspect of your practice that can be developed. The action plans are reviewed regularly with your teacher tutor and form the basis of an interim and summative report that you complete with the school.

I focused on Thinking Skills for my first action plan. For my second action plan I focused on Talking and Listening which was something I didn't feel confident at delivering. On the whole I would recommend choosing something you have an interest in or something you really want to develop. This is the way to get the most out of the experience.

Mark Kirkwood
Ligoniel PS, Belfast

Portfolio

Throughout your induction you are required to keep a record of your professional development and your progress. A portfolio allows you to keep track of key moments in your teaching and the reflections of the

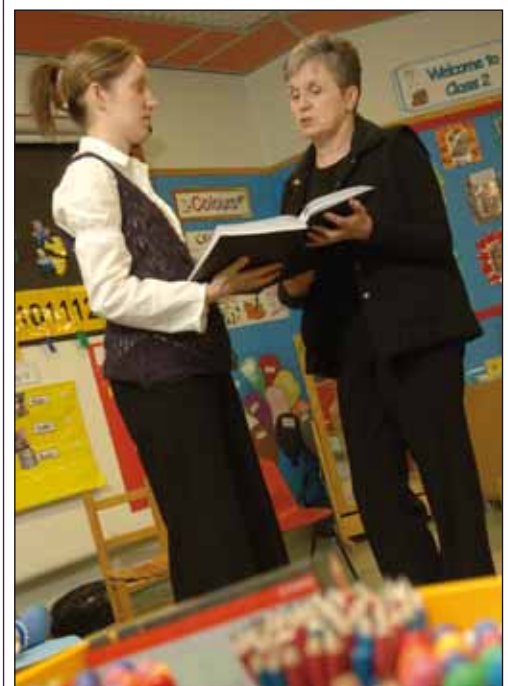
practice in your classroom. It provides a comprehensive record of evidence of your development and contains reports and records from the school.

Classroom observation

One of the central aspects of induction is that you are supported in your development by other colleagues. Classroom observation allows you the opportunity to receive valuable feedback from your teacher-tutor about your teaching. It is intended to be a supportive process and links in with the focus in your action plans.

I received great support and guidance from all members of the school community including the principal, teachers, teacher-tutor, classroom assistants and all other staff members. They all immediately made me welcome, which resulted in my confidence to embrace the opportunities I was presented with. It was reassuring to know I had a support network from the top down.

Kevin Holly
Oakgrove Integrated PS,
Derry



Induction and EPD

Entitlement and ELB support

All beginning teachers have an entitlement to professional development regardless of whether in temporary or permanent employment.

In Induction each beginning teacher will have access to 7 days of substitute cover to support his or her development. Teachers employed in a special school will be entitled to a further 1 day during induction.

Most of the days will be used to attend a series of courses provided by the ELB. For teachers in a special, nursery or post primary school some of the courses are provided on a regional basis. Each ELB holds an Induction conference in September or October that will explain the process.

At least one day should be retained for school based observation and working with the teacher-tutor. Teachers not in post are still welcome to attend the courses provided.

temporary employment it may take a little longer. The summative report provided at the end of induction may help to focus your attention on areas for development in EPD.

EPD is designed to build on induction and asks you to look carefully at your teaching and how pupils learn.

Professional Development Activity (PDA)

During EPD you are asked to undertake 2 professional development activities – 1 each year of EPD. The intention is to focus on the learning and teaching in your classroom. Teachers are asked to choose an area for development linked to the competences and then plan, teach and reflect on a series of lessons. The opportunity allows you to reflect on the complex process of teaching and learning and to discuss with other colleagues the most effective practices to optimise both

pupil learning and your own professional development.

Classroom observation

It is a vital part of the EPD process that you are observed in the classroom. It provides an excellent opportunity for you to receive feedback and engage in professional dialogue with your teacher-tutor. It is intended that you will be observed at least once during each PDA.

Entitlement and ELB support

EPD teachers are entitled to 4 days substitute cover over the 2 years of EPD. In the first year of EPD the ELBs provide a 1 day course introducing you to EPD and its requirements.

In the second year of EPD ELBs provide a one day course to enhance your professional development.

In addition to the 1 day course each year you are entitled to 1 day to use for your professional development.



The introduction courses are extremely helpful and are a great way to meet other beginning teachers from different schools. You can share your experiences and realise that you are all going through the same thing. Also get involved in extra school activities such as school drama productions, clubs, societies and competitions. This will allow you to get to know the children on a different level outside the classroom setting.

Bridgene Poland
Little Flower Girls' School,
Belfast



EARLY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Early Professional Development (EPD) is the second stage of professional development after you qualify. You can start EPD once you have completed induction and you are in permanent or longer term temporary employment. The EPD stage will normally take two years to complete but if you are in



Schools working together

In the article that follows Professor Tony Gallagher at Queen's University, Belfast, describes an exciting new initiative to encourage school collaboration.

Northern Ireland is in a time of unprecedented change and our education system faces significant challenges. Meeting these challenges will require, in the words of the Chief Inspector Marion Matchett, "... much higher levels of collaboration, joined-up thinking and action, and integrated working ..." (Chief Inspector's Report, 2007).

The Sharing Education Programme (SEP) is a £3.6 million, three year programme which will promote reconciliation by facilitating collaboration and sharing between the first cohort of specialist schools and their partners. The programme is funded by the International Fund for Ireland and Atlantic Philanthropies and is being managed by Queen's University. The first twelve school partnerships in SEP are deliberately cross-sectoral and comprise almost 60 schools and over 2,500 pupils.

We wanted to release the imagination and creativity of the teachers in the schools, so did not prescribe the focus

of their activity. Rather, we asked only that the partnerships had to contain sustainable, high quality engagement by young people from different cultural traditions and backgrounds. Most importantly, the partnerships will complement, or better add to, schools' existing key priorities: schools working together, through collaboration, can and will advance our shared aspiration that all schools in Northern Ireland become good schools.

Queen's University School of Education is providing training and research support for the schools, in collaboration with the leadership programmes in the Regional Training Unit. Oversight is provided by an independent panel of experts in education and reconciliation chaired by Sir George Bain and there will be independent evaluation.

Collaborative models allow schools to retain their distinctive ethos, while providing opportunities for their pupils to experience diverse teaching and learning contexts. Young people will gain academic or vocational qualifications as well as invaluable experiences that they can use in their

journey into adulthood. Teachers, pupils and in many cases parents will form relationships that cross existing cultural and traditional barriers.

In the longer term we will provide exemplars of best practice in collaborative practice that can be used by schools throughout Northern Ireland to foster reconciliation. We hope also that the positive effects of the programme will be felt throughout the wider community; that surely will be the greatest achievement of SEP. It is important that the SEP develops further, and in so doing, builds on the vision and ambition for a better, shared future of all those schools that have agreed to take part in this exciting and groundbreaking initiative.

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Tied together: Pictured at the launch of the new £3.7 million Sharing Education Programme, launched at Queen's University are L to R: Denis Rooney, Chairman of programme co-funders, The International Fund for Ireland; Professor Tony Gallagher, Head of the School of Education at Queen's, who are administering the programme and Padraic Quirk, from co-funders The Atlantic Philanthropies.

Top Irish Youth Volunteers visit Washington D.C. Awards



Award winners at the Prudential 'Spirit of the Community Awards', in Washington D.C.

Ireland's top two youth volunteers were honoured at The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards in Washington, D.C., on Sunday, 7th May, in the National Museum of Natural History's Baird Auditorium.

Ciara McCrink 19, of Jonesborough, Newry, Co. Down, a final-year student at St. Paul's High School, and Patrick Travers, 18, of Carnew, Co. Wicklow, a sixth-year student at Colaiste Bhríde, were congratulated by American football star Peyton Manning and by Prudential Financial, Inc. Chairman and CEO Arthur F. Ryan during the evening event, which is held each May to honour volunteers from the United

States, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan Prudential Spirit of Community Awards programmes. During their visit, they attended a variety of sightseeing and social activities over a three-day period.

Ciara and Patrick were selected as Ireland's top two youth volunteers in March as part of the Pramerica Spirit of Community Awards. Ciara was honoured for providing the leadership to keep a local youth club from closing, helping a young disabled boy with daily physiotherapy, and raising £5,500 to travel to Romania with her school to work for a week in a number of orphanages. Patrick was

recognised for collecting €7,500 to benefit impoverished people in Africa by spearheading numerous awareness and fund-raising activities.

A two-month search for the 2008 top youth volunteers in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland began in September. The Pramerica Spirit of Community Awards solicited applications from post-primary and second-level students who have engaged in volunteer community activities during the past year. All applicants will be recognised with certificates. The top 20 volunteers will be honoured at a gala dinner celebration in Belfast in 2008, where



they will receive €500 awards and engraved silver medallions. Two of the 20 finalists will be named “All-Ireland Youth Volunteers of the Year” and will receive gold medallions, €1,000 grants for the charities of their choice, and an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. next May to attend recognition events for the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards programme.

Programme information and application forms were distributed in early September to all post-primary and second-level schools in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

This year there are two award categories – the Junior Category (for students under the age of 16 on the 15th of November 2007) and the Senior Category (for students under the age of 19 on the 15th of November 2007). Principals are required to select, from the total number of applicants in their school, one or two applicants, one for the Junior Category and/or one for the Senior Category, to go forward for All-Ireland judging. These completed application forms must be endorsed and signed by the Principal and submitted to Pramerica postmarked no later than the 15th of November 2007.

A judging panel made up of Pramerica employees, past honourees, NAPD and GTCNI officials will select 20 finalists and announce them in early February. Finally, a distinguished All-Ireland Selection Committee chaired by Nobel laureate John Hume will select two All-Ireland Youth Volunteers of the Year, who will be announced in April 2008 in Belfast at the gala awards dinner for all of the finalists.

The Pramerica Spirit of Community Awards programme is sponsored by Pramerica Systems Ireland Limited, a Prudential Financial, Inc. (PFI) company; the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD); and the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI).



Pictured are Ciara McCrink & Patrick Travers, Pramerica Spirit of Community All-Ireland Youth Volunteers of the Year at the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards in Washington D.C.



Pictured are Ciara McCrink & Patrick Travers, Pramerica Spirit of Community All-Ireland Youth Volunteers of the Year at Capitol Hill, Washington D.C.



Pictured are Art Ryan, Prudential Financial, Inc. Chairman and CEO with Ciara McCrink & Patrick Travers, Pramerica Spirit of Community All-Ireland Youth Volunteers of the Year



A case study in online CPD – Harberton School and Outreach Services

The General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI) has long argued that the provision of high quality continuing professional development (CPD) must be a priority for schools and the wider education support services. Indeed, the Council, has asserted that a 'mixed-economy' approach to professional development – with system-wide strategic and school-based provision, as well as opportunities for individual teachers to have their needs met – is necessary, if CPD is to be flexible and adaptable in a changing educational environment.

Moreover, the Council has argued that, with modern web-based technology, the ability to tailor CPD to individual needs has never been greater. This 'virtual type' CPD delivery can also go a long way to overcome the constraints imposed by geography and availability of time, thus helping to ensure equity of access to provision.

Many of the elements of the above approach to CPD have recently been adopted by Harberton School and its school outreach services in Belfast to ensure flexibility of access to quality provision. The school's seven year strategic plan states, with respect to

professional development, that the school will seek to develop a highly skilled, highly trained and knowledgeable up-to-date professional staff. To this end, the school has recently provided an opportunity for all the teaching staff to take the web-based course, 'ADHD: Effective Management and Teaching Strategies' provided by the Institute of Child Education and Psychology, Europe (ICEP Europe).

According to Martin McGlade, the principal of Harberton: "this modular based online course provided teachers with a unique learning opportunity, which not only fulfilled individual CPD needs, but was also related to the school's strategic plan for staff development. It was also related to the PRSD process in that every teacher was expected to achieve the course accreditation and certificate by passing the course assessment. To enable staff to meet this objective 'directed time' was cancelled for one term to give teachers a degree of flexibility as to when they would take the modules." Martin also emphasised that the delivery mechanism for the course was highly responsive to teachers' work/life balance needs while at the same time promoting the idea of a

learning community and a whole-school learning experience by way of an online discussion forum. He also stated: "the virtual and highly participatory nature of the course delivery created 'a buzz about the place', when staff were working together on the various modules. The staff were also highly motivated because the course was regarded as highly relevant to their day-to-day teaching responsibilities."

Jenny Robinson, the Regional Director (N.I. and Scotland) of ICEP Europe commented: "the flexibility offered by the online provision has been a 'big hit' with teachers. The modules are also accredited by ICEP which gives teachers who complete the modules a sense of satisfaction and reward. The modules can also be taken as part of the new Advanced Diploma in Professional Development, Inclusive Education run jointly by ICEP Europe and the School of Education at Queen's University, Belfast."

For more details on this course and other course offered by ICEP Europe contact Jenny Robinson: j.robinson@icepe.eu or at 07828780567



Adding an international dimension

Jonathan Stewart is the European and Public Affairs Manager at the British Council Northern Ireland and in this article he shares examples of two programmes which offer professional development opportunities for teachers.

Financial support is available from the British Council in Northern Ireland to help teachers who want to add an international dimension to their school. The British Council is the UK's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. Its main purpose is to build mutually beneficial relationships between people in the UK and other countries and to increase appreciation of the UK's creative ideas and achievements.

Many teachers from across Northern Ireland are already active in school linking, teacher exchanges, joint-curriculum projects and international study visits. All of the funding opportunities have one thing in common, they help bring the 'world' to the classroom. Introducing the international dimension is a great way of motivating learners and staff alike. It encourages creative, collaborative learning and meets a variety of Northern Ireland educational agendas including the Revised Curriculum, PRSD, ICT and Modern Foreign Languages provision.

In Northern Ireland the British Council offers a range of professional development opportunities for teachers and educational staff. The following case studies illustrate just two programmes, the **Fulbright Teacher and Administrator Exchange Programme** and the **Lifelong Learning Programme**.

Loughshore to Alabama

Thomas Carroll who teaches at Loughshore Educational Resource Centre in Greenisland has just returned from spending a year in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, teaching in a school for children with emotional and learning difficulties through the

Fulbright Teacher and Administrator Exchange Programme. He described his exchange experience as: "the best year of my life. I couldn't recommend it highly enough. It is the chance of a lifetime!"

Thomas feels that he gained enormously from having the opportunity to teach in a similar setting to his own and was impressed by the holistic approach in Alabama where social workers, psychologists, counsellors and teachers work alongside each other on the same site to improve the life chances of the students.

One of the challenges was learning to communicate effectively from the start with African-American children who didn't understand English as it is spoken in Northern Ireland and who themselves spoke with an accent that was unfamiliar to Thomas! However, at the end of the year he was rewarded by a warm send-off from pupils and staff alike and he is still receiving emails from them.

Thomas also travelled widely around the southern states, availing of the 14 'personal days' that teachers are entitled to, a scheme that he would like to see introduced here.

Among the highlights of his year was meeting Bill Clinton at a rally in Birmingham and visiting Graceland and he has made a great new set of friends whom he intends to visit on a regular basis.

Applications for the programme must be received by 11th December for exchanges taking place from September of the following year. For further information contact the British Council on 028 90248220 ext 226 or e-mail Fulbright@britishcouncil.org

Partners across Europe

Comenius, now relaunched as part of the European Commission's **Lifelong Learning Programme**, is for schools and colleges interested in working with other partners across Europe.

Since 2000, there have been approximately 850 Northern Ireland Comenius Partnerships involving 10,000 teachers and 140,000 pupils from 29 different European countries. Hundreds of schools have also hosted a Comenius Assistant or participated in a Comenius in-service training course or job shadow abroad.

Dungannon Primary School in County Tyrone has availed of funding through Comenius over the years. The school has 262 pupils, taught in nine mainstream classes and four Learning Support classes, and approximately 33% of the pupil base is made up of children for whom English is not their first language. In fact, the school caters for children speaking a total of 14 different languages/dialects from countries as far apart as China, Thailand, Portugal, Angola, East Timor and Poland.

When children arrived from Portugal and the Ukraine in 2002, staff immediately faced challenges of language, culture and had limited experience in such areas. In 2002, they began a multi-lateral project entitled "*My Home, Our Europe*", with schools in France, Ireland, Wales, Greece and the Czech Republic. Children explored their own cultural heritage whilst discovering their European identity together.

Over three years, the schools engaged in activities ranging from creating a partnership logo, sending teddies to visit partner schools and producing a collage illustrating the popular sports of each country as well as a CD of traditional music from all the partner countries. Other activities included a joint-country questionnaire, research and reports on national festivals and a simultaneous European Day of Culture.

Dungannon Primary School also applied successfully for Portuguese Comenius Assistants who helped to integrate the growing number of Portuguese children into the school community.

Undoubtedly, the international dimension has been fully integrated into Dungannon Primary School's curriculum, and pupils' learning experience has been totally transformed as a result. The pupils now recognise that they are true European citizens. Teachers are

more motivated and better equipped to deliver an enriched curriculum and the school is more outward looking and inclusive. For further information contact the British Council on 028 90248220 ext 239 or 247 or e-mail: helen.ferguson@britishcouncil.org

For more information on other opportunities available to teachers and schools through the British Council please check the website www.britishcouncil.org/nireland or phone 028 90248220.

Fun, Phonics and Games at the *Microsoft*® Imagine Cup 2007

A University of Ulster at Coleraine (UUC) team, who are first year students in the School of Computing and Information Engineering (SCIE), gained second place in the Ireland final of the 'Microsoft Imagine Cup 2007', which was held recently in Dublin. The team were ably mentored by PhD student Therese McGinnis.

Their project, the 'Fun Phonics Game', involved the creation of prototype educational software, designed to improve reading skills at primary school level, using Linguistic Phonics. The team gathered information from the Literacy Team in Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) and worked with a local school, Ballykelly Primary, to evaluate their approach.

Dr Michaela Black, lecturer in computer science (UUC), said, "It was a pleasure to assist the team and it has been a great opportunity for the students. With most of the team having just one year's experience on a computing course, the project was certainly challenging for them."

Team member David Gibson commented: "I had the role of main programmer which involved the coding of the game and bringing together our ideas, images and sounds to make the game a physical reality. We were the last team on the schedule to show our presentation to the six judges so it was very nerve-wrecking. We did a ten minute presentation on our game and a five minute question and answer session. It was very similar to taking

part in a show like 'Dragons Den', where you had to stand in front of the judges in a small room and effectively sell them your idea. We were the only team from Northern Ireland to make it into the finals and the day was amazing, something I will never forget."

BELB sees long-term potential in the game and are working with SCIE at

Coleraine to find funding to bring the prototype up to a level for general use. It can then be released as a support tool for linguistic phonics teaching and learning, which would include use by parents and children at home, as well as with teachers in school.

For further information email Therese McGinnis at McGinnis-M@ulster.ac.uk



SCIE Students: David Gibson, James Shiels, Rachel Brennan, Graham Taylor.



Key Messages from The Chief Inspector's Report 2004-2006

Are you interested in hearing about the key recurring themes, the strengths, the areas for improvement and the challenges which lie ahead, as outlined in the Chief Inspector's Report?

The messages given in the report are important for all those who are promoting improvement and helping young people to reach their full potential.

The Chief Inspector, Marion Matchett, is hosting a series of 6 conferences to inform leaders, teachers, lecturers and youth leaders of the implications of the main messages of the Report.

The Conferences will be held from 4.00 pm-5.45 pm on the following dates in the following venues:

Mon 12 November 2007: Clandeboye Lodge, Bangor

Tues 13 November 2007: Killyhevlin Hotel, Enniskillen

Thurs 15 November 2007: Lagan Valley Island Centre, Lisburn

Tues 20 November 2007: Canal Court Hotel, Newry

Thurs 22 November 2007: Ross Park Hotel, Kells, Ballymena

You may register in advance by using the following link:

<http://eti.nics.gov.uk/CIconference/>

Password: cir3pt46

You are also welcome to come along on the day.

We regret that we are unable to pay travel expenses.