

Consultation on Proposal for a draft Education (NI) Order

SECTION 2 (To be completed if you are making an individual response)

Name:

Address:

Town/City:

Postcode:

Signature: Date:

SECTION 3 (To be completed if you are responding on behalf of an organisation)

Name: Mr. Ronan Gorman

Position in Organisation: Chief Executive

Name of Organisation: Countryside Alliance Ireland

Address of Organisation: The Courtyard, Larchfield Estate,

Postcode: Balliesmills Rd. Lisburn. BT27 6XJ

Signature: Ronan Gorman Date: 6th March 2006

**PLEASE ensure that you have completed SECTIONS 1 and 2,
or SECTIONS 1 and 3 before continuing.**

It is important that you write clearly and legibly.
We would ask you to use black pen and
BLOCK CAPITALS at all times.

PART II – THE CURRICULUM

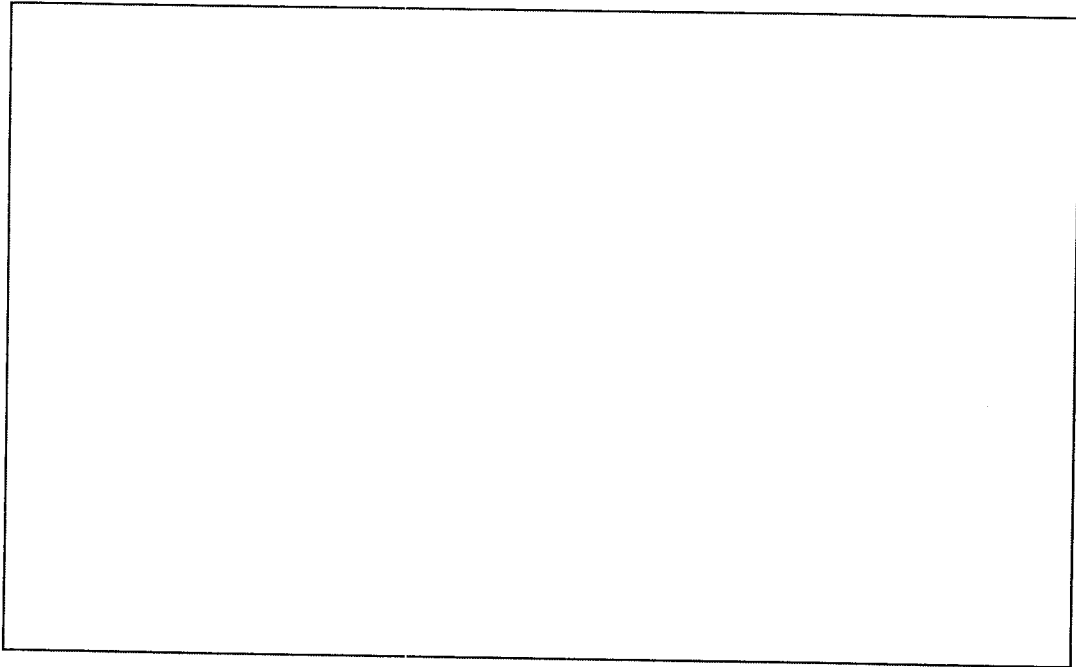
General Duty, Statutory requirements relating to curriculum, Duties relating to the curriculum

Articles 3 to 13, together with **Schedule 1**, are revised requirements on Boards of Governors and Principals as to the curriculum and assessment in grant-aided schools. The curriculum must include religious education (this requirement is unchanged), the relevant areas of learning set out in Schedule 1, and must ensure that pupils acquire and develop the specific cross-curricular skills of communication, using mathematics and using ICT and any other skills specified by the Department. The Department of Education will specify the minimum content for each area of learning, and levels of progression for the cross-curricular skills. The Department will also specify the arrangements for assessing pupils in each school year, which will include a requirement for the cross-curricular skills to be assessed using the levels of progression.

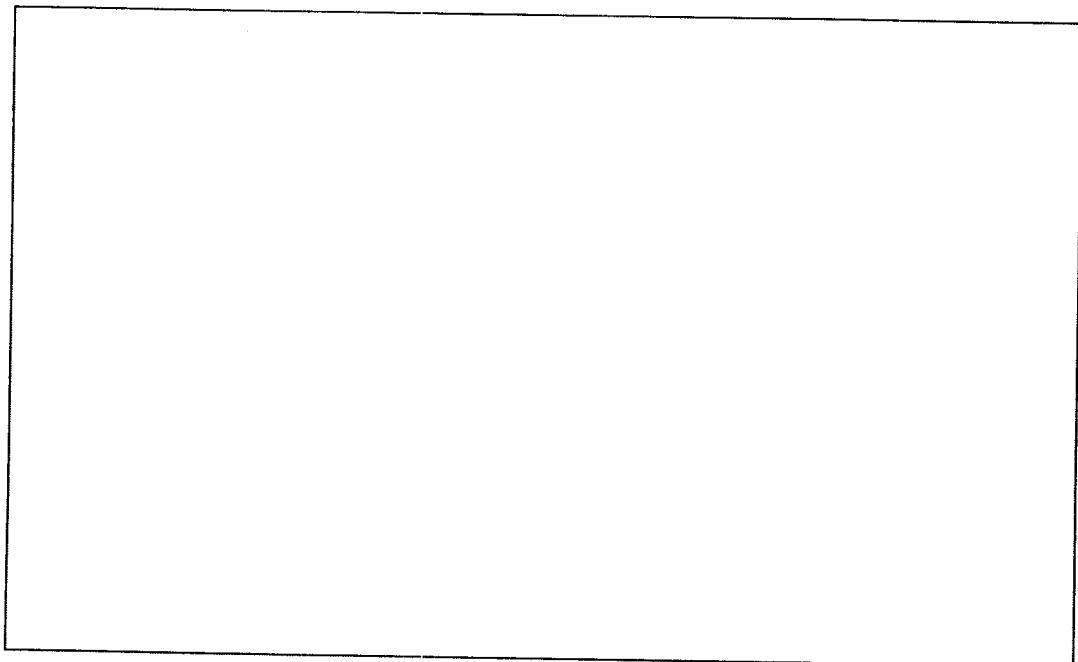
(A) If you support what these Articles are designed to do, please say why:

COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE IRELAND WELCOMES THE REVISION TO ARTICLES 3 TO 13. WE BELIEVE THAT THE RELEVANT AREAS OF LEARNING ARE ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE THAT THE CROSS-CURRICULAR SKILLS ARE ACQUIRED BY EACH PUPIL AND THAT THE QUALITY OF TEACHING WILL ENABLE THEM TO ACHIEVE OR SURPASS THE ASSESSMENTS THAT WILL BE PUT IN PLACE BY THE DEPARTMENT ENABLING THE PUPILS TO HAVE A SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT. THESE ACHIEVEMENTS WILL BUILD CONFIDENCE AND ENABLE THE PUPILS TO PROGRESS FURTHER AND BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY AND ECONOMY OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN THE LONG TERM.

(B) If you do not support all or part of what these Articles are designed to do, please say what your objections are and give your reasons:



(C) If you have made comments in (B), or for some other reason think that these Articles need to be changed, please state below what changes should be made:



PART II – THE CURRICULUM

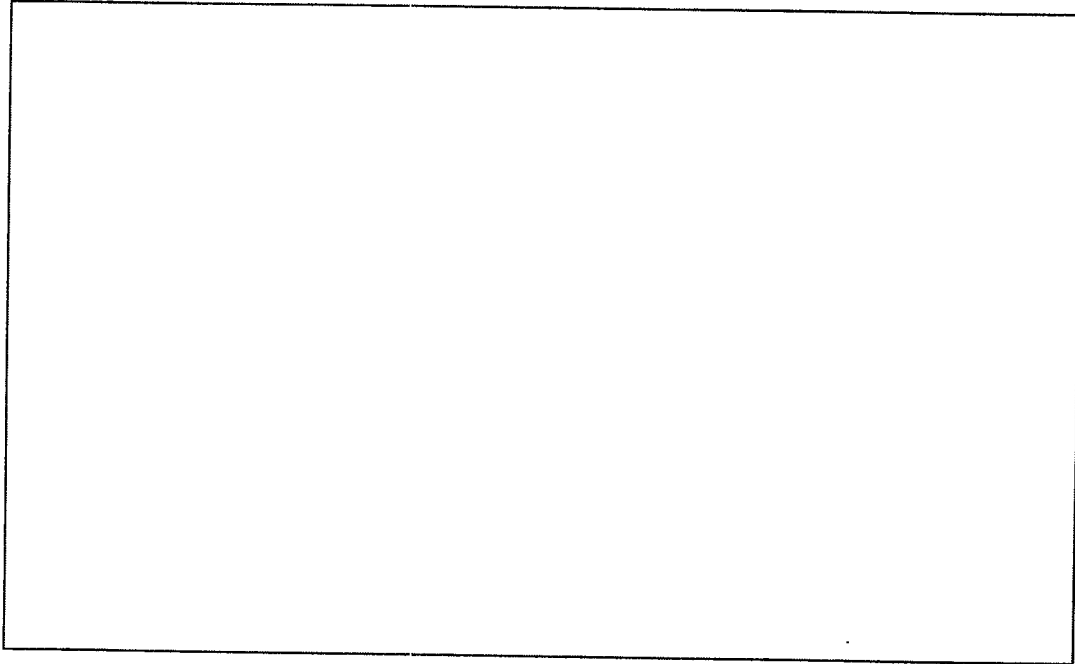
Special Cases

Articles 14 to 17 re-enact without amendment Articles 14 to 17 of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, which make clear the special cases when the statutory curriculum can be modified or disapplied.

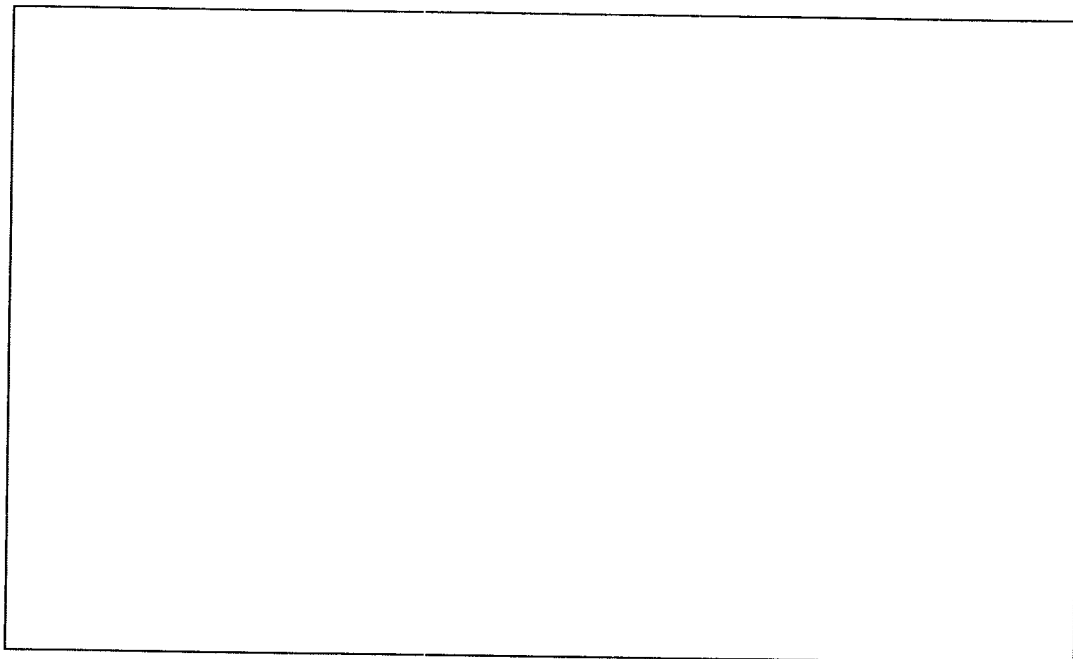
(A) If you support what these Articles are designed to do, please say why:

WE SUPPORT ARTICLES 14 TO 17 WITHOUT ADMENDMENT AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE NEED OF THE DEPARMENT, SCHOOL PRINCIPLES AND BOARDS OF GOVERNERS TO BE COMPLETELY AWARE AND HAVE AT THEIR DISPOSAL ALL THE REQUIRED INFORMATION FOR MAKING VALUED DECISIONS ON NEW PROJECTS, ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS.

(B) If you do not support all or part of what these Articles are designed to do, please say what your objections are and give your reasons:



(C) If you have made comments in (B), or for some other reason think that these Articles need to be changed, please state below what changes should be made:



PART II – THE CURRICULUM

Access to Courses for Older Pupils

Articles 18 to 22 are new requirements on schools to provide access to a wider range of courses known as the Entitlement Framework. The number of courses to which schools must provide access for pupils in Key Stage 4 and for those over compulsory school age will be specified by the Department. At least one third of these courses must be general and at least one third applied. The Department will issue lists of general and applied courses and these will be revised as necessary. The Department will be able to modify or disapply these requirements as they apply to individual schools or categories of schools.

Boards of Governors will have a new power to enter into arrangements with other schools, FE colleges and other providers approved by the Department to provide that access. In making such arrangements, Boards of Governors may include specified terms and conditions, and must take account of guidance issued by the Department. Correspondingly, FE colleges will be able to provide secondary education under arrangements entered into with schools.

(A) If you support what these Articles are designed to do, please say why:

WE ARE IN FAVOUR OF THESE NEW REQUIRMENTS AND
THE ACKNOWLEDGE THE BENEFIT THAT THESE NEW
COURSES WILL PROVIDE TO A WIDE SECTION OF OLDER
PUPILS .

THE NEW POWERS THAT WILL BE GIVEN TO THE BOARDS
OF GOVERNORS WILL ENABLE THEM TO ENTER INTO
LONG TERM COMMITMENTS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND
FE COLLEGES THAT WILL ENABLE STABILITY, UTILISE
RESOURCES AND RETAIN THE HIGH LEVEL OF EXPERTISE
THAT WILL BE REQUIRED TO DELIVER SUCH AN IMPORTANT
PART OF THIS NEW LEGISLATION .

- (B)** If you do not support all or part of what these Articles are designed to do, please say what your objections are and give your reasons:

- (C)** If you have made comments in (B), or for some other reason think that these Articles need to be changed, please state below what changes should be made:

HOWEVER, WE FEEL THAT THE RURAL COMMUNITIES MUST BE CONSIDERED WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR ABILITY TO ATTEND THESE COURSES AT FACILITIES THAT MAY BE SOME DISTANCE AWAY.

PROVISION MUST BE MADE WITHIN THE LEGISLATION FOR THE AVAILABILITY OF A STRUCTURED TRANSPORT SYSTEM OR ASSISTANCE IN TRAVEL THAT WILL ALLOW PUPILS FROM RURAL AREAS TO ATTEND THESE NEW COURSES AND THAT THEY WILL BE IN NO WAY DISADVANTAGED BECAUSE OF THEIR RURAL LOCATION.

PART II – THE CURRICULUM

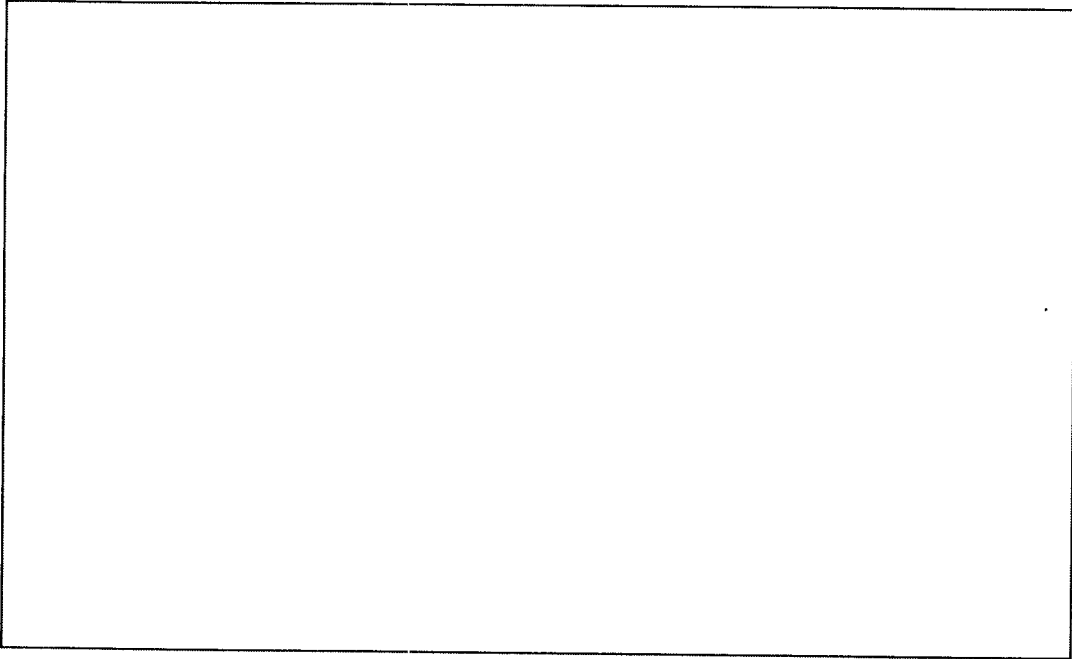
Miscellaneous and Supplementary

Article 23 re-enacts without amendment Article 29 of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, which requires each Education and Library Board to provide curriculum advice and support for all grant-aided schools in its area in accordance with a scheme prepared by the Board and approved by the Department of Education.

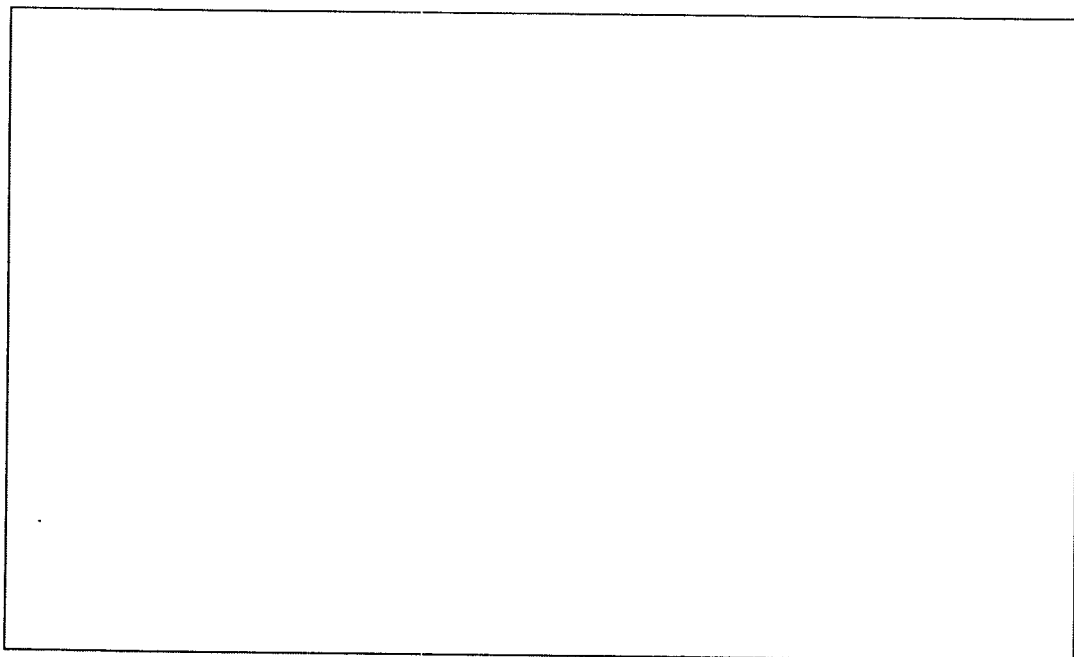
(A) If you support what this Article is designed to do, please say why:

COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE IRELAND SUPPORTS THIS ARTICLE WITHOUT AMENDMENT. WE FEEL THAT IT IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT THE EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARDS PROVIDE CURRICULUM ADVICE AND SUPPORT TO ALL GRANT AIDED SCHOOLS WITHIN ITS AREA

(B) If you do not support all or part of what this Article is designed to do, please say what your objections are and give your reasons:



(C) If you have made comments in (B), or for some other reason think that this Article needs to be changed, please state below what changes should be made:



PART II – THE CURRICULUM

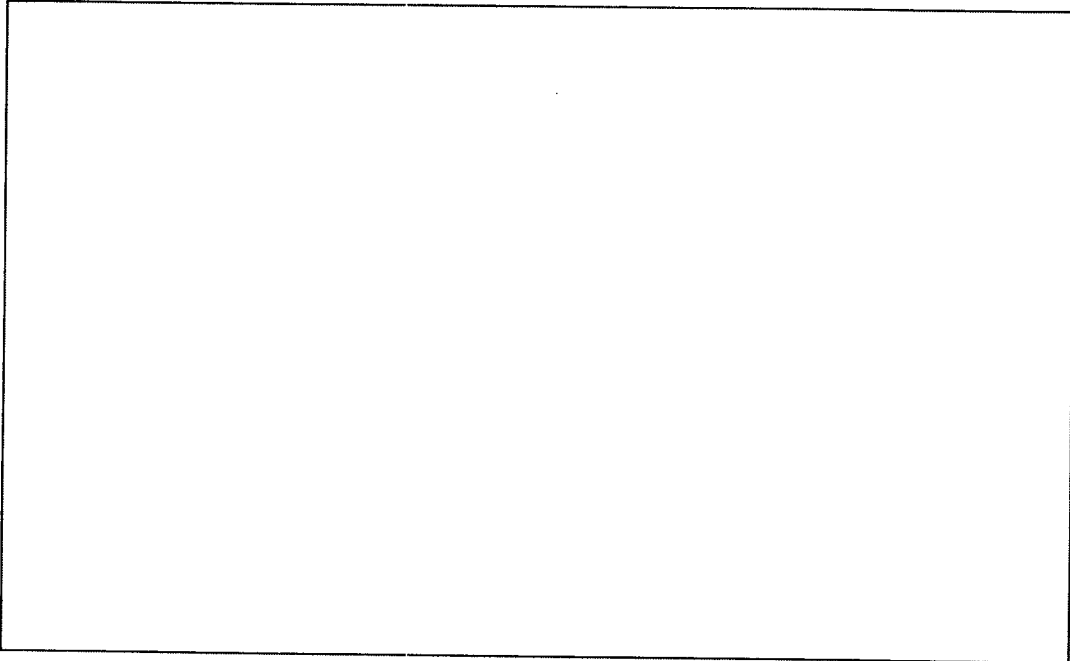
Miscellaneous and Supplementary

Article 24 re-enacts, with minor amendments resulting from the changes in Part II, Article 31 of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, which allows the Department to make regulations requiring Education and Library Boards, Boards of Governors or Principals to make available certain information relating to their schools whilst protecting the privacy of certain individuals.

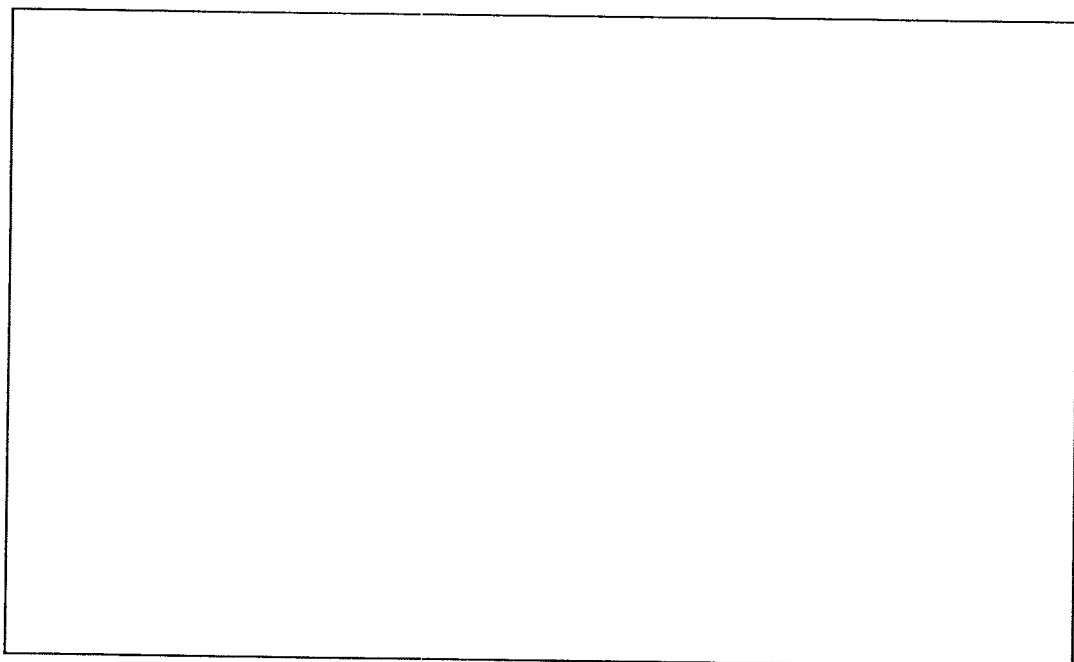
(A) If you support what this Article is designed to do, please say why:

WE AGREE WITH THIS ARTICLE AND THE MINOR AMMENDMENTS MADE. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT INFORMATION IS MADE AVAILABLE AT MINIMAL COST AND IT IS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE THAT THE PRIVACY OF INDIVIDUALS IS NOT COMPRIMISED BY ITS DISCLOSURE WHEREBY INFRINGING ON AN INDIVIDUALS HUMAN RIGHTS COVERED UNDER THE DATA PROTECTION ACT.

(B) If you do not support all or part of what this Article is designed to do, please say what your objections are and give your reasons:



(C) If you have made comments in (B), or for some other reason think that this Article needs to be changed, please state below what changes should be made:



PART II – THE CURRICULUM

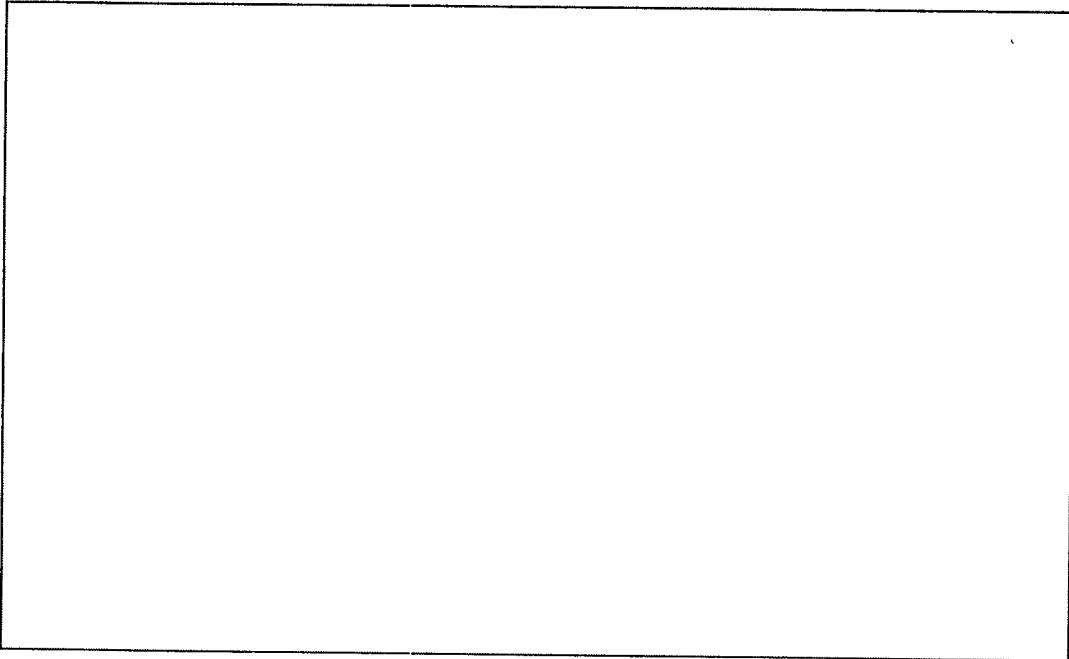
Miscellaneous and Supplementary

Article 25 re-enacts Article 33 of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, with amendments to enable curriculum appeals tribunals to consider complaints against Boards of Governors in carrying out their functions under Articles 18-22.

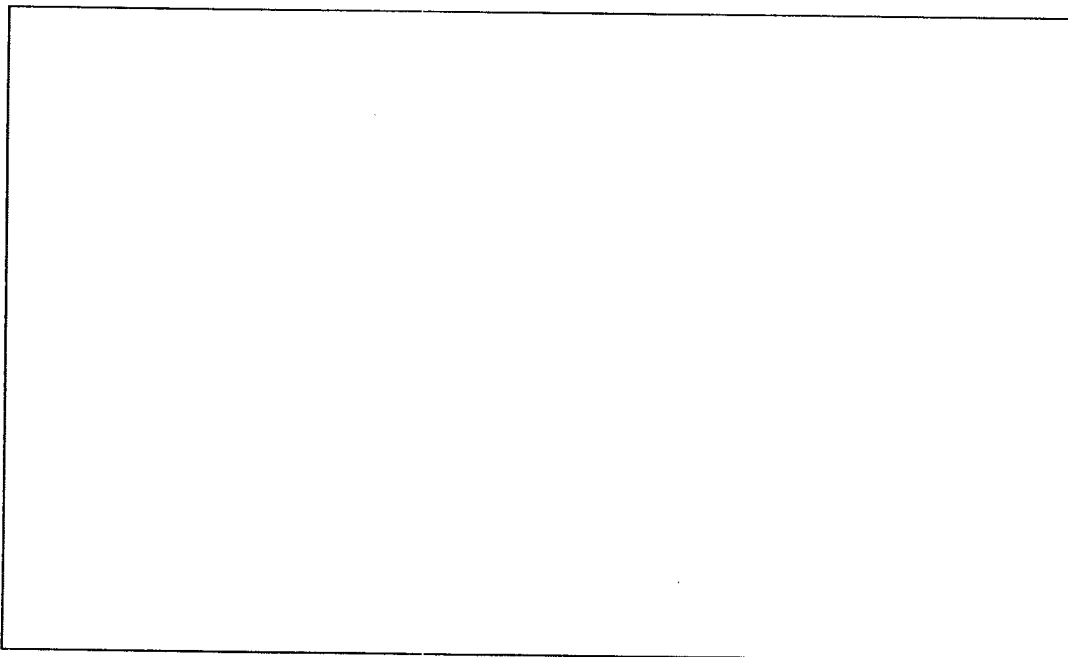
(A) If you support what this Article is designed to do, please say why:

ARTICLE 25 IS A WELCOME ADDITION TO THE EDUCATION REFORM (NI) ORDER 1989 AND THE AMENDMENT WILL ALLOW A DEMOCRATIC AVENUE FOR APPEALS AND ONE WHICH HAS BEEN LONG OVERDUE.

(B) If you do not support all or part of what this Article is designed to do, please say what your objections are and give your reasons:



(C) If you have made comments in (B), or for some other reason think that this Article needs to be changed, please state below what changes should be made:



PART II – THE CURRICULUM

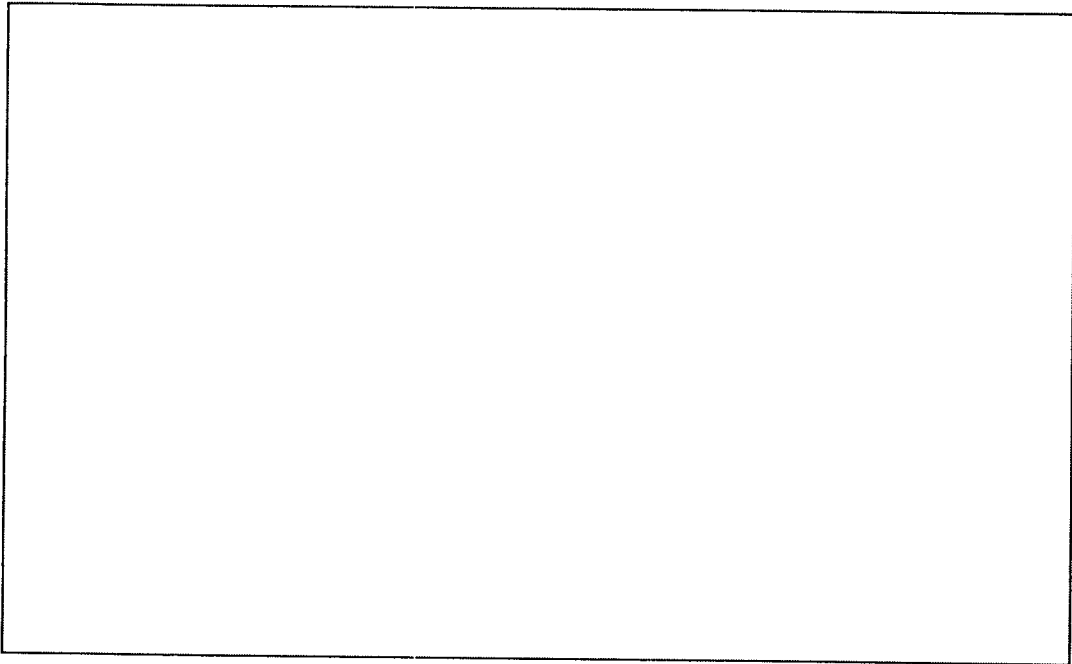
Miscellaneous and Supplementary

Article 26 lists provisions in Part II which do not apply to nursery schools, nursery classes in primary schools, or hospital schools.

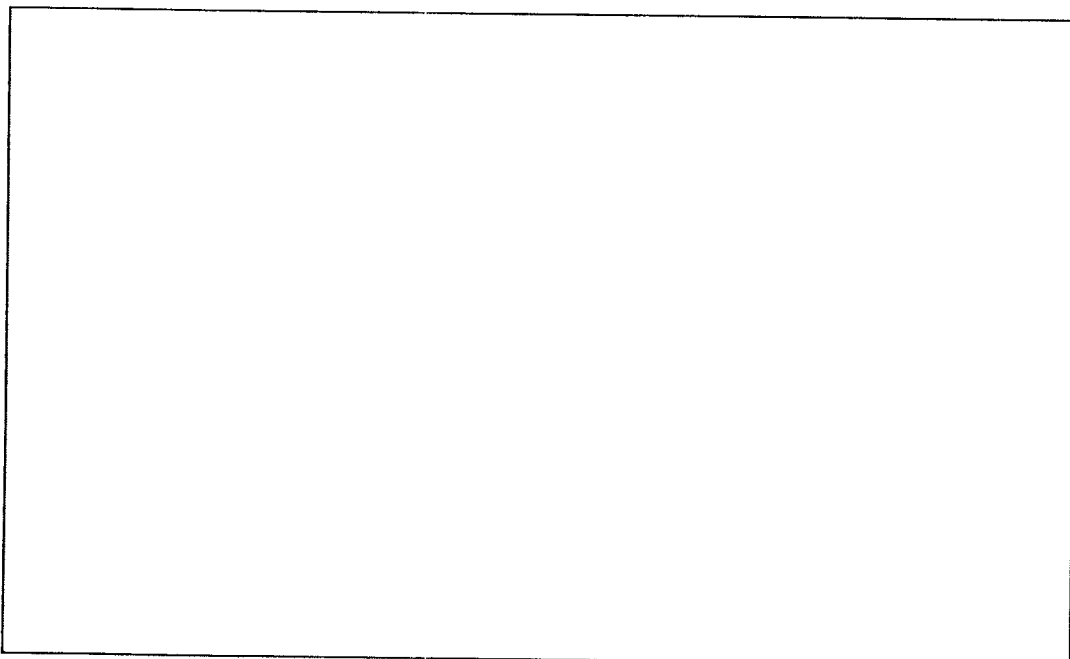
(A) If you support what this Article is designed to do, please say why:

WE AGREE WITH ARTICLE 26 AND THE PROVISIONS MADE
THAT DO NOT APPLY TO NURSERY SCHOOLS, NURSERY CLASSES
IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS OR HOSPITAL SCHOOLS

(B) If you do not support all or part of what this Article is designed to do, please say what your objections are and give your reasons:



(C) If you have made comments in (B), or for some other reason think that this Article needs to be changed, please state below what changes should be made:



PART III – MISCELLANEOUS AND SUPPLEMENTARY

Admissions

Articles 27 to 29 provide for all post-primary schools to use similar arrangements for admitting pupils. All grant-aided schools must have admissions criteria, and where schools receive more applications than they have places, they will use their admissions criteria to determine who shall be admitted. All post-primary schools will draw up their admissions criteria from a menu of criteria specified in regulations made by the Department. Schools will be prohibited from using any form of academic selection based on the ability or aptitude of the child. The regulations may specify criteria which may, or may not, be used, and may also specify the order in which criteria must be used. The Department is required to consult post-primary schools and other bodies before making such regulations.

The Department will also make regulations about the admission to post-primary schools of pupils with exceptional circumstances. The regulations will specify the meaning of exceptional circumstances and provide for a body to be established to consider such admissions. Pupils with exceptional circumstances who are admitted to a school will be regarded as additional to the admissions number for the school.

(A) If you support what these Articles are designed to do, please say why:

- (B)** If you do not support all or part of what these Articles are designed to do, please say what your objections are and give your reasons:

COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE IRELAND HAS GRAVE CONCERNS REGARDING ARTICLE 28. WE BELIEVE AND WOULD NOT WISH TO COMMENT ON THE ACADEMIC SELECTION AS THIS IS A COMPLEX MATTER AND WE ARE NOT SUITABLY QUALIFIED TO EXPRESS AN EXPERT OPINION. HOWEVER, WE ASK THE DEPARTMENT TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER THE NEEDS OF RURAL CHILDREN WHEN SPECIFYING THE NEW SELECTION CRITERIA. WE WOULD NOT WISH TO SEE "THE DISTANCE A PUPIL LIVES FROM A SCHOOL" AS A KEY CRITERIA . THIS WOULD SERIOUSLY DISADVANTAGE RURAL CHILDREN . WE URGE THE DEPARTMENT TO SELECT A CRITERIA THAT WILL EMBRACE THE ABILITY OF RURAL CHILDREN TO ATTEND A SCHOOL OF THEIR CHOICE. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE A CRITERIA OF RANDOM SELECTION TO BE INTRODUCED. THIS CRITERIA WOULD MEAN THAT EVERY CHILD HAS AT LEAST, AN EQUAL CHANCE OF HAVING A CHOICE. THIS WOULD GO A LONG TO WAY TO ALLAY THE FEARS OF MANY PARENTS WITHIN THE RURAL COMMUNITIES THAT FEEL THEY WILL BE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST.

- (C)** If you have made comments in (B), or for some other reason think that these Articles need to be changed, please state below what changes should be made:

PART III – MISCELLANEOUS AND SUPPLEMENTARY

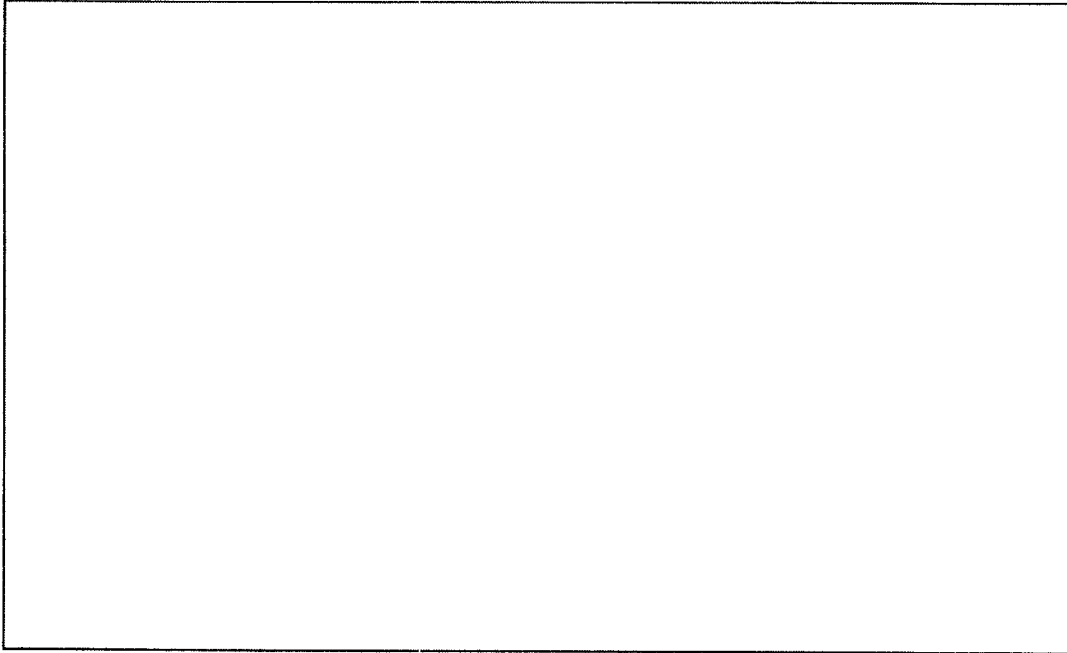
Suspension and expulsion of pupils from grant-aided schools

Articles 30 to 33 require the Department to prepare a common scheme for the suspension and expulsion of pupils in all grant-aided schools, which must be followed by Education and Library Boards and Boards of Governors. Education and Library Boards will become the expelling authority for all grant-aided schools in their area. Regulations made by the Department will provide arrangements for the consideration of appeals against suspensions and for a tribunal to be set up to consider appeals against expulsions. The education of a suspended pupil will be the responsibility of the school and, in circumstances determined by the Department, the Education and Library Board can provide assistance to the school in providing that education.

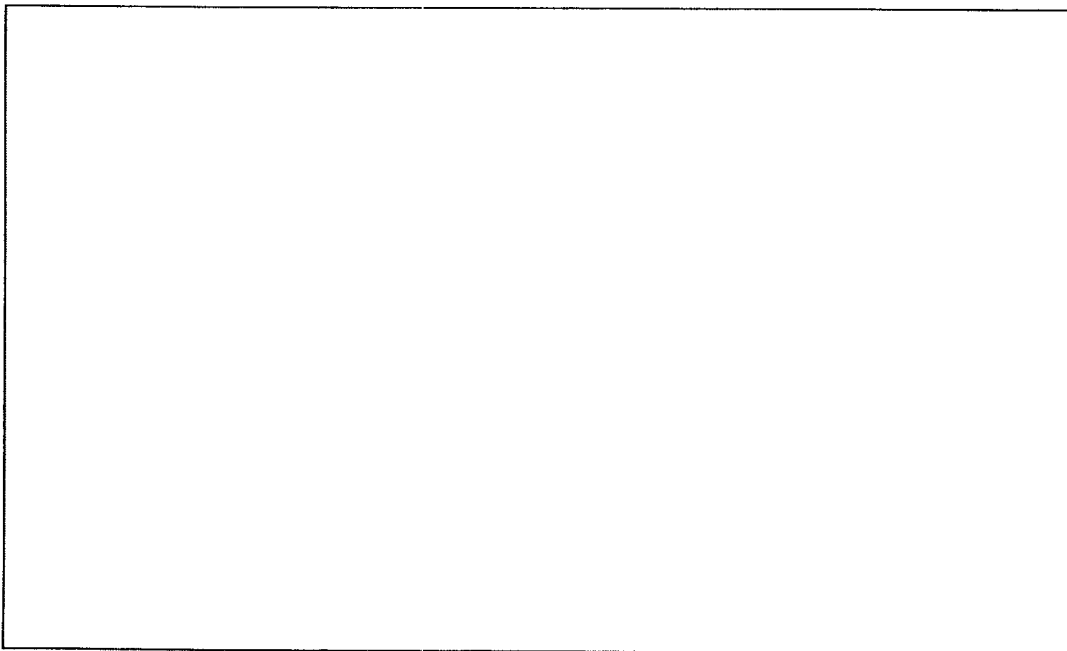
(A) If you support what these Articles are designed to do, please say why:

COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE IRELAND WELCOMES THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO PREPARE A COMMON SCHEME FOR THE SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF PUPILS IN ALL GRANT AIDED SCHOOLS. THE APPEALS PROCESS IS AN IMPORTANT AND INTEGRAL PART OF THIS PROCESS AND THE REQUIREMENT TO ENSURE THAT THE SUSPENDED PUPIL HAS ACCESS TO CONTINUED EDUCATION AND SUPPORT WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM THE DEPARTMENT TO THE RELEVANT EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD.

(B) If you do not support all or part of what these Articles are designed to do, please say what your objections are and give your reasons:



(C) If you have made comments in (B), or for some other reason think that these Articles need to be changed, please state below what changes should be made:



PART III – MISCELLANEOUS AND SUPPLEMENTARY

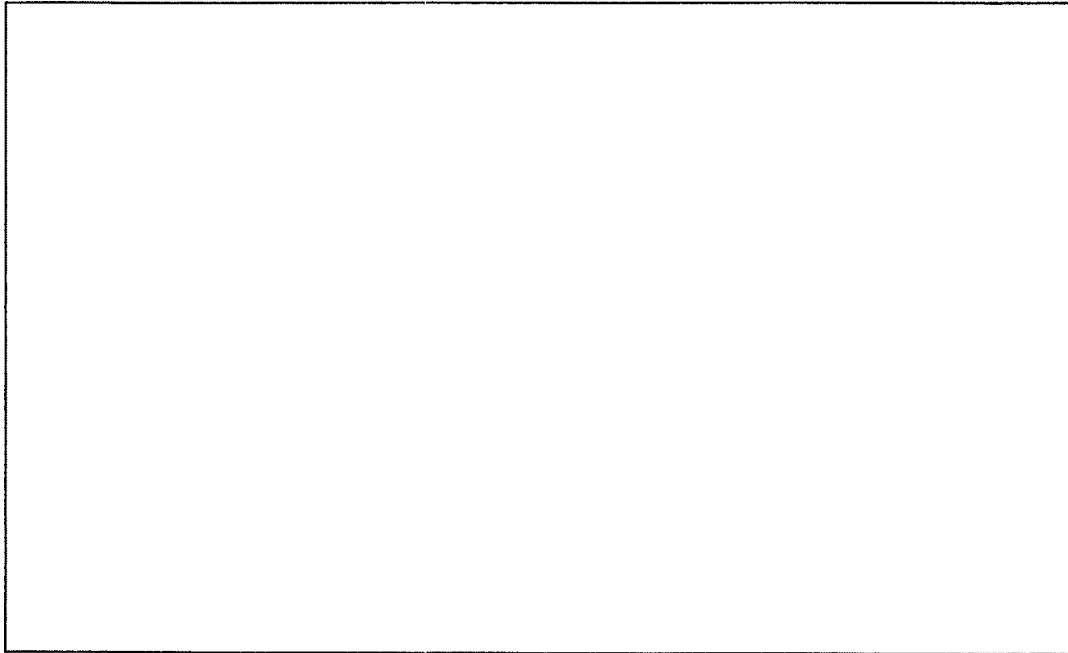
General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland

Articles 34 to 36 will enable the General Teaching Council to approve the qualifications of persons for registration as teachers; to remove from the register any person found guilty of serious professional misconduct; and to determine the terms and conditions of service of the Registrar.

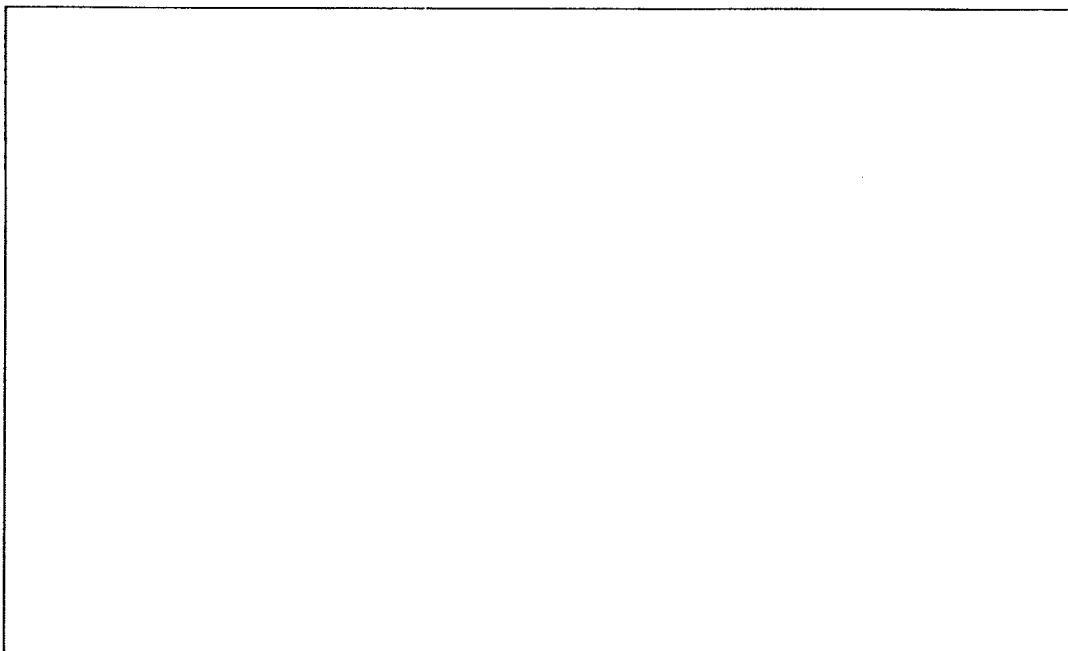
(A) If you support what these Articles are designed to do, please say why:

COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE IRELAND SUPPORTS ARTICLES 34 TO 36 AND APPROVE OF THE ABILITY OF THE GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL TO APPROVE QUALIFICATIONS OF PERSONS FOR REGISTRATION AS TEACHERS. WE ALSO AGREE WITH THE RIGHT FOR THE COUNCIL TO REMOVE FROM THE REGISTER ANY PERSON FOUND GUILTY OF SERIOUS PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT

(B) If you do not support all or part of what these Articles are designed to do, please say what your objections are and give your reasons:



(C) If you have made comments in (B), or for some other reason think that these Articles need to be changed, please state below what changes should be made:



PART III – MISCELLANEOUS AND SUPPLEMENTARY

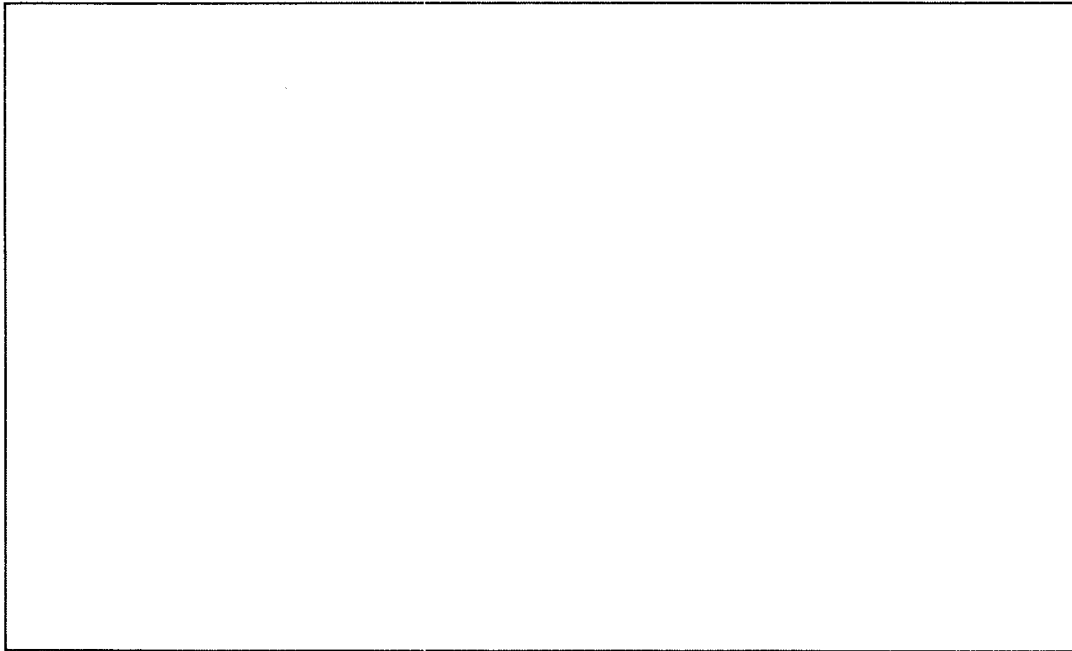
Institutions of further education

Articles 37 and 38 enable the Department for Employment and Learning to make an order to amend the membership of the governing bodies of institutions of further education; and provide for members of those governing bodies to be paid for their service as members.

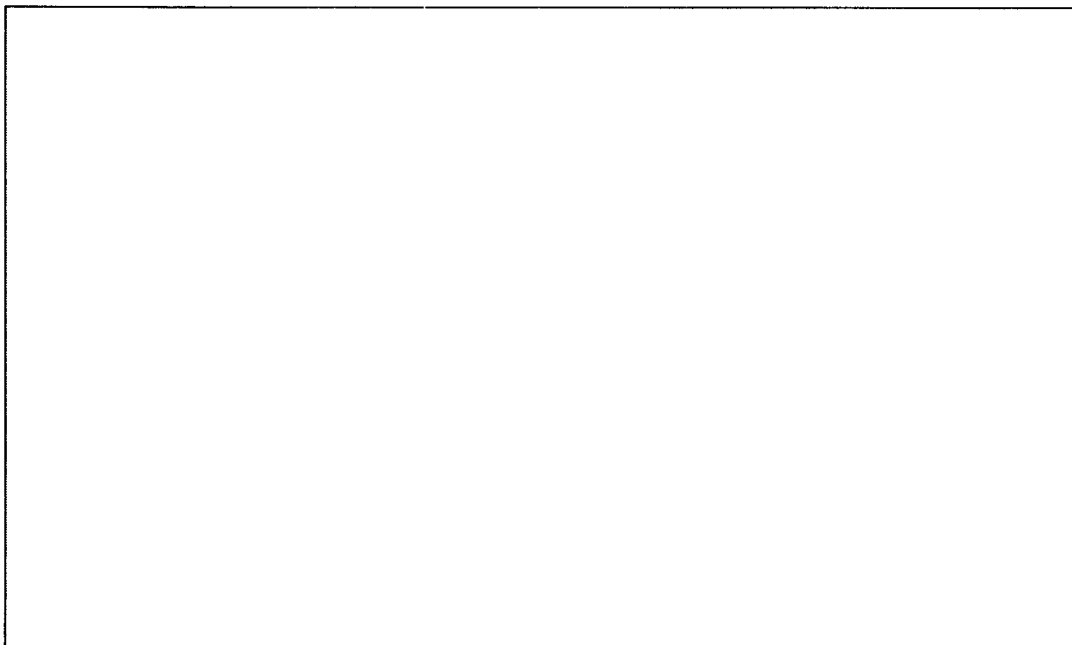
(A) If you support what these Articles are designed to do, please say why:

WE AGREE WITH ARTICLES 37 AND 38 ENABLING THE DEPARTMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING TO MAKE AN ORDER TO AMEND THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE GOVERNING BODIES OF INSTITUTIONS OF FURTHER EDUCATION. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT THOSE GOVERNING BODIES SHOULD BE SUITABLE RECOMPENSED FOR PROVIDING THEIR SERVICES ON THE NEW GOVERNING BODIES.

(B) If you do not support all or part of what these Articles are designed to do, please say what your objections are and give your reasons:



(C) If you have made comments in (B), or for some other reason think that these Articles need to be changed, please state below what changes should be made:



PART III – MISCELLANEOUS AND SUPPLEMENTARY

Miscellaneous

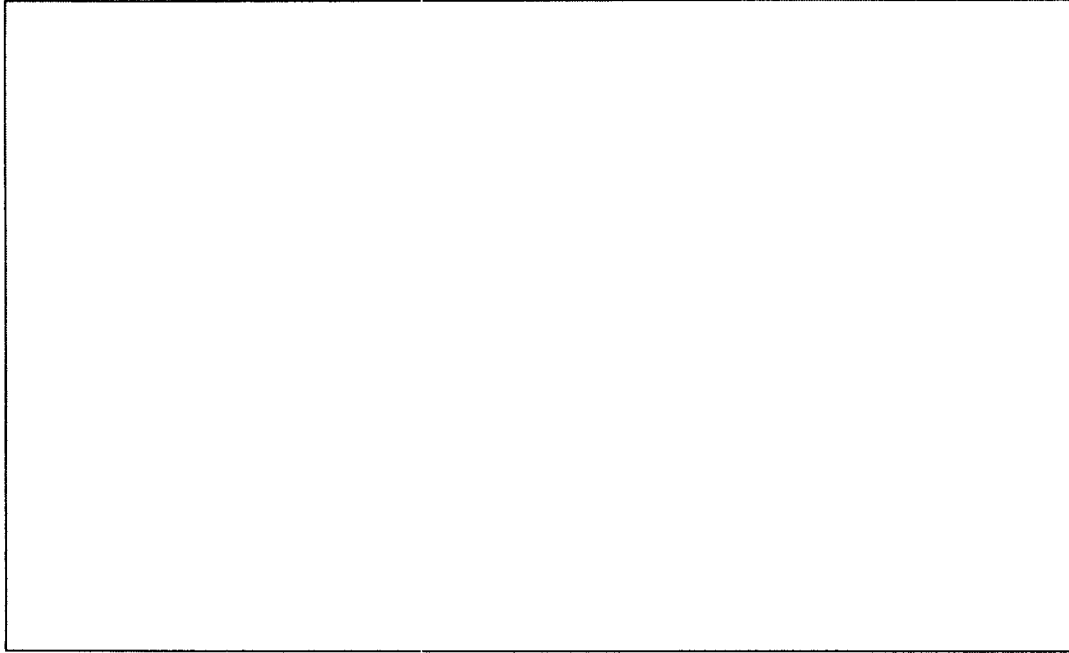
Article 39 removes the existing requirements to carry out baseline assessments of pupils in their first year of compulsory education as a result of the new requirement to assess pupils in each school year (Article 9).

(A) If you support what this Article is designed to do, please say why:

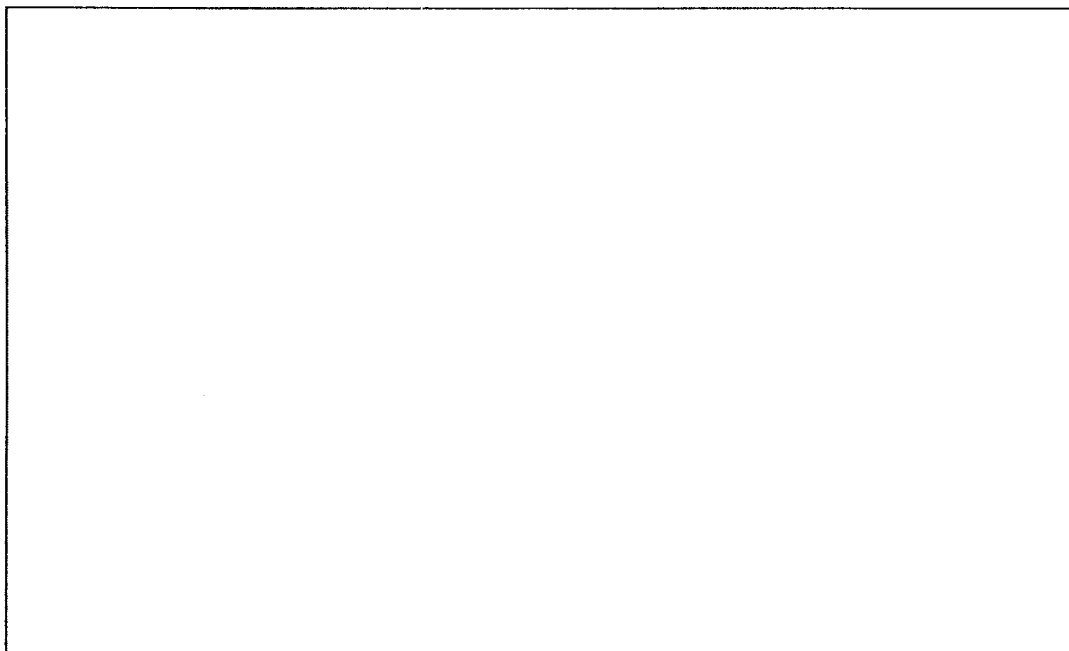
WE AGREE WITH ARTICLE 39 AND THE RECOMMENDATION TO REMOVE THE EXISISTING REQUIREMENTS TO CARRY OUT BASE LINE ASSESSMENTS OF PUPILS IN THEIR FIRST YEAR OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION.

WE FEEL THAT THERE IS SUFFICIENT ASSESSMENTS COVER UNDER ARTICLE 9

(B) If you do not support all or part of what this Article is designed to do, please say what your objections are and give your reasons:



(C) If you have made comments in (B), or for some other reason think that this Article needs to be changed, please state below what changes should be made:

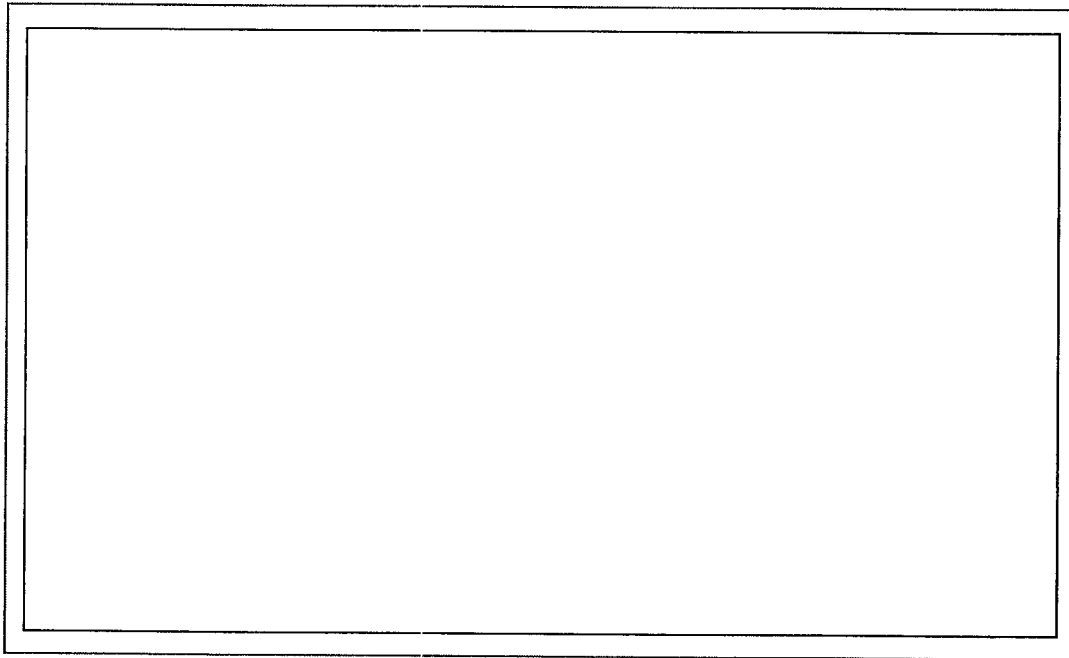


PART III – MISCELLANEOUS AND SUPPLEMENTARY

Miscellaneous

Article 40 removes the existing requirement on Boards of Governors of schools to hold an annual parents' meeting.

(A) If you support what this Article is designed to do, please say why:

A large, empty rectangular box with a double-line border, intended for the respondent to provide their reasons for supporting the changes in Article 40.

- (B)** If you do not support all or part of what this Article is designed to do, please say what your objections are and give your reasons:

COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE IRELAND STRONGLY DISAGREES WITH THE RECOMMENDATION THAT THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS WILL NOT BE REQUIRED TO HOLD AN ANNUAL PARENTS MEETING. WE FEEL THAT BY REMOVING THIS OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PARENTS TO VOICE THEIR OPINION IN AN OPEN AND DEMOCRATIC ENVIRONMENT IS A BACKWARD STEP AND WILL REMOVE THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS FROM A VALUED SOURCE OF INFORMATION AND FEEDBACK.

WE THEREFORE URGE THE DEPARTMENT TO DELETE THIS ARTICLE FOR THE ORDER

- (C)** If you have made comments in (B), or for some other reason think that this Article needs to be changed, please state below what changes should be made:

PART III – MISCELLANEOUS AND SUPPLEMENTARY

Miscellaneous

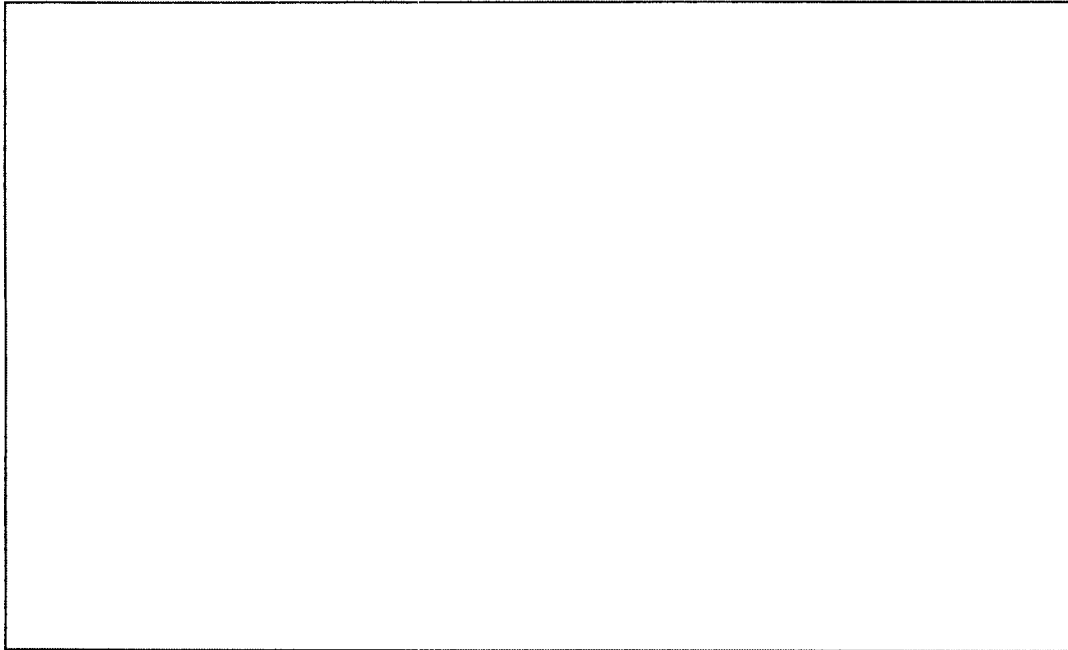
Article 41 makes it clear that the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) may charge people fees for attending courses of education or instruction that it provides. DARD will specify in regulations how much it will charge and what it will charge for. At the moment, DARD charges fees for students attending higher education programmes at the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE). This fee is the same as that paid by students attending other colleges of further and higher education or universities and goes towards the costs of providing the course.

DARD has no immediate plans to introduce fees for other types of course.

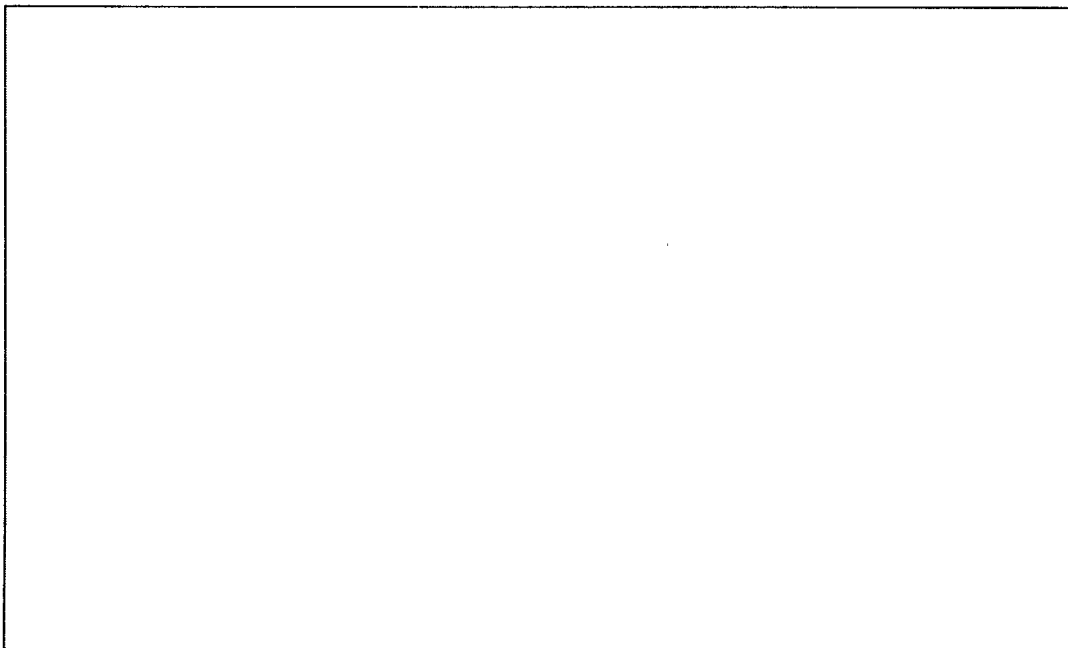
(A) If you support what this Article is designed to do, please say why:

<p>COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE IRELAND WELCOMES THE INCLUSION OF ARTICLE 41. THIS ENABLES FOR THE FIRST TIME CLARITY AND TRANSPARENCY OF CHARGING BY DARD. WE ALSO WELCOME THAT THE FEE FAID IS THE SAME AS THOSE PAID BY STUDENTS ATTENDIING OTHER COLLEGES OF FE.</p>
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(B) If you do not support all or part of what this Article is designed to do, please say what your objections are and give your reasons:



(C) If you have made comments in (B), or for some other reason think that this Article needs to be changed, please state below what changes should be made:



PART III – MISCELLANEOUS AND SUPPLEMENTARY

Supplementary provisions

Article 42 is concerned with the content and approval of orders and regulations made under the Order.

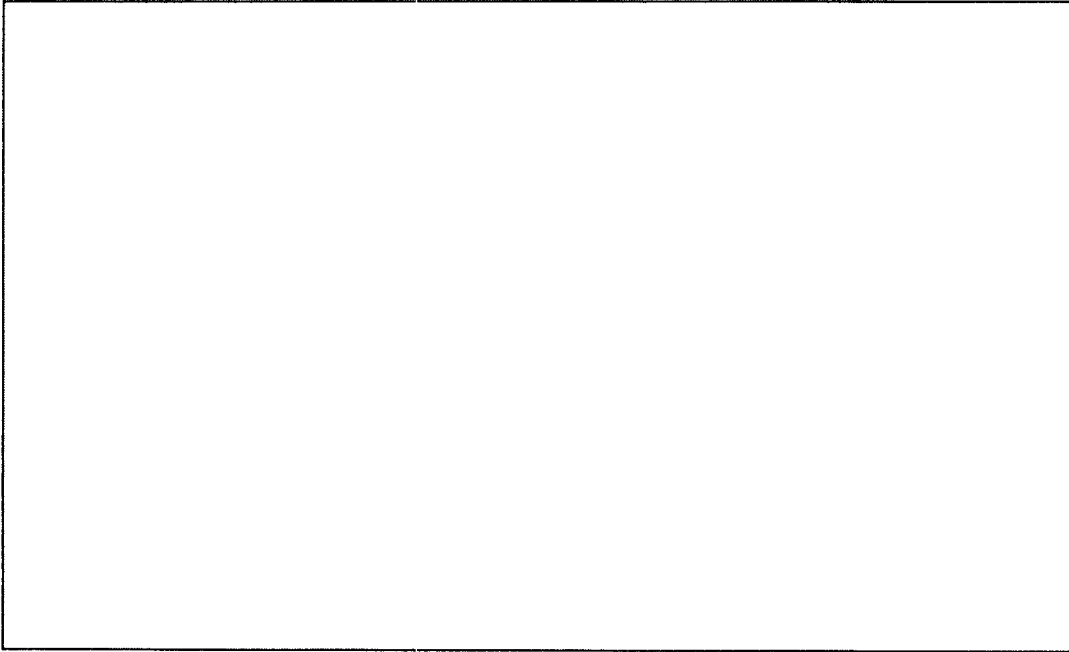
Article 43 and Schedules 2 and 3 amend or repeal a number of provisions which are minor in nature or are required as a result of the changes made by other parts of the Order. The amendments resulting from the introduction of the Entitlement Framework include provisions to:

- make clear that a pupil who may attend another school for part of his education can be registered at only one school;
- clarify the roles and responsibilities of Boards of Governors and Principals under the Education Orders where a pupil is registered at one school and attends another for part of his education; and
- ensure that information is made available about courses being provided in FE colleges and that information about a pupil's attainments in an FE college is made available to the school at which he is registered.

(A) If you support what these Articles are designed to do, please say why:

<p>COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE IRELAND AGREES WITH ARTICLE 42 AND ARTICLE 43 AND SCHEDULES 2 AND 3.</p> <p>IT IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES ARE CLARIFIED AND THAT THERE IS BOTH CLARITY AND TRANSPARENCY REGARDING REGISTRATION.</p>
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(B) If you do not support all or part of what these Articles are designed to do, please say what your objections are and give your reasons:



(C) If you have made comments in (B), or for some other reason think that these Articles need to be changed, please state below what changes should be made:

