

Overview of Responses to ‘Every School a Good School: A Policy for School Improvement’.

1. This paper sets out a summary of the consultation on *‘Every School a Good School – A Policy for School Improvement’*.
2. The proposed policy is child-centred and the overall aim is that every child will leave compulsory education with the appropriate standards of literacy and numeracy. The clear expectation is that all parties involved – the Department of Education, the education support agencies, Boards of Governors and staff – will maintain an unwavering focus on quality and standards.

Background

3. Our school system has very many strengths: average performance in Northern Ireland, for example, at 5+ GCSEs A*-C, is relatively high (64%) and this is testament to the commitment and professionalism of senior managers and teachers who have, over many years, so ably assisted their pupils to achieve good or better standards.
4. However this success masks a degree of underperformance. In the case of pupils from socially disadvantaged backgrounds only 37% achieved 5+ GCSEs A*-C in 2005/06. The picture becomes more worrying when the figures are amended to include English and mathematics where only half of all pupils achieve 5+ GCSE (or equivalent) at grades A*-C.
5. The previous school improvement programme did not have sufficient emphasis on improvement for every school. There was also too much confusion over the relative responsibilities of all those with a role to play, from government to the statutory authorities such as the Education and Library Boards to schools themselves and their leadership teams. There also needed to be much more emphasis on

both 'raising the bar' and 'closing the gap' in terms of standards and outcomes in schools. This new policy seeks to address all of these issues.

Consultation Exercise

6. The policy proposals contained within 'Every School a Good School' were informed by discussions with professionals, policy-makers and young people and by responses received to the initial paper on school improvement circulated as part of a suite of papers setting out the policy direction of the education aspects of the Review of Public Administration.
7. The formal consultation exercise sought to engage with as wide a range of interested parties as possible, including teachers, governors, parents, young people and those in the business community. In particular the Department sought to encourage principals of post-primary schools to obtain the views of their pupils on the policy proposals.
8. The consultation issued on 21st January 2008 and ran until 31st March 2008. Responses were received from 203 organisations and individuals and have been categorised as follows:

- 26 - Government Departments; Education & Library Boards; CCMS; Teacher Unions; Managing Authorities; Statutory Bodies and Business Organisations;
- 25 - Grammar Schools;
- 39 - Non Selective Schools;
- 5 - Special schools;
- 66 - Primary Schools;
- 2 - Nursery Schools.
- 35 - District Councils and others;
- 5 - Personal responses.

A full list of respondents can be found at Annex B.

Overview of Consultation Responses

General

9. In general responses were mainly supportive of the aims of the policy and in relation to the specific questions set out in the consultation document however a number of common themes were identified in which respondents raised concerns:
 - Role of Governors;
 - Leadership;
 - Data;
 - Parents/Community Involvement;
10. A detailed analysis of all of the consultation responses is attached at Annex A.

Role of Governors

- There was general agreement that the role of Governors is key within school improvement however there was significant concern over the extent of the proposed changes in Governors' role.
- In order to offer effective support and challenge governors will be required to undertake significantly greater responsibilities at a time when it is already difficult to enlist sufficient and suitable personnel to serve
- Effectiveness of Governors capacity to challenge queried given they are part-time volunteers.
- Crucial question is how to enrol more high quality governors who are keenly interested and are prepared to accept all of the duties and responsibilities
- In order to equip Governors for their new role they require effective and appropriate training and support.

Leadership

- Majority of respondents agreed that high quality leadership in terms of self-evaluation/self-reflection is fundamental however it was felt that at

times the pace of change is so rapid that quality time to reflect is at a premium, especially for teaching principals.

- It was suggested that the definition of leadership and the exemplification of it within the school context needs to be explored and agreed.
- Collaboration is central to the process of improvement – principals who have demonstrated the necessary qualities of leadership should be able to support and mentor staff in schools where such qualities do not exist, or take up substantive posts in such schools.
- There was uncertainty as to whether insisting principals have a leadership/management qualification in itself will solve the problem. However it was proposed that a full review of the scope and content of all existing leadership and management programmes is essential to inform decisions on leadership development.
- Leadership training should begin within initial teacher training and continue through continuing professional development.

Data

- In order for schools to effectively deal with the data requirements outlined better support and training is needed to help evaluate performance, identify areas for improvement and assist with target setting.
- Data must be contextualised to the school – such indicators should not be used on a raw data basis for comparison purposes.
- Disappointment expressed at the fact that qualitative characteristics seem to be underdeveloped/overlooked in the document. Value-added measure should be developed as a matter of urgency.

Parents/Community Involvement

- Definition of 'high-level' of parental support is required for consistency, suggestion that focus should be on the quality of support.
- Overwhelming majority of respondents agreed that the involvement of parents and the community in supporting the life of the school is key

however concerns were raised that in practice it remains outside the control of schools and at times can be difficult to get parents involved.

- Concerns were raised that there were no proposals to empower parents as a collective body. It was suggested that the establishment of a sectoral support body for parents might be a good start in redressing this imbalance.

Summary of Responses to Consultation

General Comments

The majority of respondents included general comments within their response. The main themes were as follows:

- **Overall tone of the document is not positive** – in particular, these proposals represent a significant shift in the DE/schools relationship with a move away from one of collegiate support towards one where schools are labouring under a cloud of measurement, labelling and ultimate threat of closure.
- **Document loses its ‘strong focus on pupils as individuals’ outlined at the beginning** – suggestion to include a definition of ‘child-centred’ as an opening statement.
- **The totality of change and the number of ongoing/new initiatives has created a ‘swamp effect’ which is not conducive to clear thinking/planning** – Proposal to postpone implementation until 1st April 2009 to coincide with the inception of ESA which would result in a single change for schools thereby avoiding the transition from ELBs to ESA.
- **Sustained school improvement will only come through effective self evaluation, where there is trust between all the stakeholders and a sense that everyone is working together** - the perception from this document is that we are returning to the days of the inspector as the person to be feared rather than the critical friend culture that was developing through ‘Together Towards Improvement’.
- **Role of Governors** - concern that the expectations and demands placed on governors will inhibit people from applying, unless careful thought is given to incentivising the role. Proposal that in order to equip governors for their new role their training and support needs to be properly funded, designed and monitored.

- **Leadership** – there was disagreement amongst respondents as to the value of PQH, some agreed that it should be a mandatory requirement whilst others doubted whether the current qualification is designed to produce the kind of leadership required to deliver on this policy. Proposals to include the study of leadership as a module at pre service level; specific management courses for middle management should be developed and a cohesive regional leadership support programme should be developed, perhaps to use the experiences of good quality retired principals/second principals to disseminate good practice or mentor principals who require it.
- **Collaborative Working** – concern that weak schools would be left to rely on own resources to develop and implement improvement plans links among schools and colleges should be made a normal part of the educational system, thus making it easier for one school to seek support from another.
- **Data** - careful consideration needs to be given to the quantity of data that schools will need to collect and collate. In addition a value-added measure should be developed as a matter of urgency.
- **Need recognition that schools cannot be held responsible for what has happened/not happened in the first 5yrs of a child's life.**

Question 1: Do you agree that the list represents the key characteristics of a successful school

30% of respondents strongly agreed with the characteristics of a successful school; 45% agreed; 21% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.

Suggested additions to the list of characteristics included:

- Effective pastoral care structures;
- An extensive and varied range of extra-curricular activities contributing to the development of the individual pupil;
- Respect for and nurturing of linguistic and cultural diversity;
- Effective discipline policies are in place;
- High quality relationships – among pupils, between pupils and staff, among staff and between the school generally and parents;
- Greater links should be forged to include the private sector, FE and the wider community including community groups and the voluntary sector;
- All schools should express an ethos which explicitly promotes both equality of opportunity and good relations;

General Comments

- **Characteristics should be categorised into 4 strategic groups and be weighted appropriately:**
 - **Ethos**
 - **Performance**
 - **Governance, Leadership and Management**
 - **Pupil Educational Experiences**
- **Characteristics need to be contextualised in a much wider framework** - These factors are important in success in school however they ignore many of the problems that are outside the control of individual schools; schools must be well resourced.
- **Strongest influence on the success or otherwise of a school is the quality of the staff i.e. the commitment, enthusiasm and competence of the staff**
- **The emphasis placed on self-improvement should permeate the whole school, to include the role of non-teaching staff**
- **Self-evaluation and school development plans are commendable tools** - a high level of quality training offered to schools will be crucial if success is to be achieved.
- **Too many characteristics are listed** – should be a few main characteristics on which schools should focus. If these characteristics

were present in schools then any additional characteristics would evolve from them:

1. High Quality Leadership at all levels but particularly the quality of the principal's leadership and management style;
 2. Ethos of school – collaboration; collegiality; communication and consistency;
 3. Quality internal assessment procedures are the essence of a successful school;
 4. Quality continuing professional development (CPD);
- **Role of Governors** – this is indeed key but to offer effective support and challenge governors will be required to undertake significantly greater responsibilities at a time when it is already difficult to enlist sufficient and suitable personnel to serve; governors may not have the necessary skills, expertise or desire to challenge the principal; effectiveness of governors capacity to challenge queried given they are part-time volunteers; uptake of training for Boards of Governors is very low; use of word challenge is unfortunate – surely 'advice' coupled with 'support' should define the role of the Board of Governors.
 - **Leadership** - Training of staff is critical – need a carefully crafted INSET for schools at all levels of management and leadership on self-evaluation within schools; no indication is given regarding how one defines a non committed teacher and what happens to such teachers to negate their detrimental effect on a school;
 - **Parents/Community Involvement** - Definition of 'high-level' of parental support is required for consistency, suggestion that focus should be on the quality of support rather than on numbers; Involvement of parents and community in supporting the life of the school is key but outside the control of schools; can be difficult to get parents involved;
 - **Data** - emphasis on data encourages competition between schools rather than a willingness to work with and learn from others; Interpretation of achievement, improvement and ambition need not necessarily be purely academic - contextual information on selection, funding, pupil/teacher ratios, SEN, environment and socio economic factors etc are all vital to the perceived success of a school and account should be taken of all of these factors. Value added issue; FSME is not an accurate measure of deprivation; Disappointing that qualitative characteristics are underdeveloped or overlooked in the document; A clear connection needs to be made between these characteristics and the indicators;
 - **The importance of high quality teachers is understated** – a recent report from the McKinsey group claimed that attracting and retaining high quality teachers was the key characteristic of effective schools;

- **Involvement of Pupils** - DE must seriously address the current extent and quality of the direct involvement of pupils in the life and work of their schools – research evidence suggests that at present the involvement of children in school policy making is limited in NI. Schools in NI must be required through legislation to establish school councils that can routinely and consistently enable pupils to be proactively involved in giving their views on how their school can improve etc...

Question 2: Do you agree with the list of key issues to be addressed?

65% of respondents agreed that these were the key issues to be addressed; while 35% disagreed.

Suggested Additions

- All teachers should share in the leadership of the school (distributed leadership) and schools should be inspected to determine how they train teachers internally in aspects of leadership;
- Ensuring that all children follow an educational pathway which is appropriate for them and in a school which caters for that pathway;
- Measures to address parent indifference;
- Socially balanced intakes as the issue to be addressed;
- A Healthy School Standard;
- An ethos which promotes equality of opportunity;
- Importance of literacy and numeracy for all young people with hearing impairment.

General Comments

- **Key issues should be restructured:** to align with the characteristics in previous section, to give primacy to teachers and professional communities of practice – the success of school improvement will ultimately depend on the commitment and professionalism of teachers;
- **Key issues should be matched up to specific actions at a later point in the document;**
- **These issues need to be considered in subsets linked to ethos, performance, governance, leadership, management and pupil's educational experiences;**
- **IME:** Consultation does not address how DE will support IME in the future nor consider the implications of its proposals in an Irish-medium setting;
- **These are DE issues and not key issues for schools;**
- **It would appear that the role of the teacher is seen as unimportant;**
- **Clarification needed re: procedures when teaching is unsatisfactory** - too much time and effort is being put into unsatisfactory teachers – removing a 'failing' teacher is very difficult and should be made easier;
- **Recognition that maintaining and disseminating good practice is very important in the context of school improvement;**

- **Factors that have an influence on such improvement remain to be addressed** - including the size of classes, financial resourcing (in particular inequality in funding between primary and secondary schools) and initiative overload;
- **How can the inspection process act as an incentive to improvement and a partnership with the schools?** - Inspectors visiting school every 10yrs is stressful and does not always contribute to school improvement;
- **Policy should contain mention of multi-cultural society** - and in particular the need to develop tolerance and concern for others within schools;
- **Need to redefine achievement in a much broader and creative way rather than depend on the narrowly defined criteria of public examination results** - other achievements should also be used as an indicator of performance;
- **Special schools** - standards of literacy and numeracy in special schools will always be 'poor' when compared to mainstream standards. How will this be addressed?
- **Role of Teachers** - teacher's roles and responsibilities are not mentioned in the key issues but surely teachers are the key players in the provision of education within schools?
- **New Teachers/Recently Qualified Teachers** - Role of HEI ITE provider has been largely relegated to periphery; much greater emphasis should be given to their role, responsibilities and accountabilities in relation to school improvement; training of new teachers or very recently recognised teachers has to be a priority if pupils in schools are to benefit over the longer term;
- **Leadership** - the definition of leadership and exemplification of it within the school context needs to be explored and agreed; Development and support is required to ensure high quality leadership at all levels; High quality leadership is fundamental but increasingly head teachers are unable to provide the leadership they want to provide, due to an over emphasis on paper-work and new initiatives; A forum of experienced principals should be available to provide advice on leadership; Need to provide training and support to principals in managing poor performance among staff members; Role of SMT needs urgent attention as it is not clearly defined by DE, particularly in the area of monitoring and evaluating a) the curriculum and b) whole school issues as outlined in the SDP;
- **Governors** - Concern over change in governor role; DE should carry out a review of the effectiveness of BoG in providing scrutiny and

direction; Need effective and appropriate training and support for Governors;

- **Parental Involvement** – agree that a high level of parental engagement is important however a lack of engagement of many parents with schools and education should not be attributed to schools and teachers as it is an issue outside of a school's control;
- **Data** - data must be contextualised to the school; the information/data given to schools is not of sufficient quality nor is it issued in sufficient time for maximum usage of the data; Ask for reconsideration of FSM as main indication of deprivation and suggest a scale related to special needs; need to measure value-added.

Question 3: Do you agree with the list of key principles upon which the policy will be based?

73% of respondents agreed with the list of key principles; 27% disagreed.

Suggested Additions

- The ethos of an institution is a fundamental factor in improvement;
- Putting pupils at the centre of the policy – would welcome a more explicit reference to child-centred education;
- Interventions will be applied if and when required.

General Comments

- **Insufficient emphasis on the importance of establishing good relationships as a means of achieving school improvement;**
- **Not enough emphasis on helping schools and their staff** - teachers and leaders must be given the resources, especially time to engage in this process;
- **The focus on teaching and learning must be unrelenting;**
- **Schools cannot be held accountable (responsible) for the standards achieved by its pupils as so many other factors are at work;**
- **Tone of this chapter is negative** - with its emphasis on inspection, underachievement, intervention and accountability;
- **Principles need to be reduced in number and be more appropriately worded** – in order to improve their clarity and emphasis;
- **Key principles should include reference to an acceptance that early intervention is the most effective strategy;**
- **Inspection is not ‘critical’ if school improvement is promoting self-evaluation as critical** – rather it is an important element in school improvement by helping to provide quality assurance of the school’s own processes;
- **All schools are capable of improvement but schools are not all equally capable of improvement** – the circumstances of some are much more challenging and so these schools require more support in order to achieve these goals;
- **This is a scattergun approach** - 12 points have been raised, net result is too many initiatives allowing poor leaders; headmasters; school governors to be diverted from the basics and generating scope for excuses to be devised for poor performance;

- **Emphasis is placed on the child/young person being at the centre of the process of school improvement** – how will this be evidenced in practice?
- **Many of the key principles of the new policy are appropriate if they are sustained within an appropriate values framework** – should refer to GTCNI’s code of values and professional practice;
- **Leadership** - too narrow a focus in the document in terms of the ‘type’ of leadership required; Effective leadership requires self-evaluation/self reflection however the pace of change is so rapid that quality time to reflect is at a premium, particularly for teaching principals. Collaboration is central to the process of improvement – principals who have demonstrated the necessary qualities of leadership and the ability to motivate staff and pupils alike should be able to: support and mentor staff in schools where such qualities do not exist; or take up substantive posts in such schools;
- **Boards of Governors** – can be difficult for schools in attracting Governors with expertise; concerned this role will place too much responsibility on the shoulders of a lay-person and they won’t be willing to accept this huge unpaid role; BoG’s aren’t trained/equipped to ‘challenge’ much of the practice in schools - effective training must be provided to BoG to increase their capacity;
- **Data** – perception that there is an over emphasis on data as a measure of performance in the document. In order for schools to effectively deal with the data requirements outlined better support is needed to help evaluate performance, identify areas for improvement and assist with target setting. Schools are best suited to identifying the issues and using the appropriate baseline data understood within the **context** of the school setting however a value-added measure is urgently needed.

Question 4: Do you agree with the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities proposed for the new school improvement policy?

61% of respondents agreed with the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities proposed; 39% disagreed.

General Comments

- **What confidence can principals and staff have in approaching ESA for support when it's also the role of ESA to reflect on shortcomings?**
- **Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities diagram** - It is regrettable that the diagram on p25 appears to emphasise the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of ESA, DE and ETI more than those of schools. This is at odds with the central thrust of the policy that improvement is primarily a school led process;
- **A huge burden is being placed on ESA before it is even up and running; it needs to get established before undertaking the roles defined;**
- **If schools are to be accountable for their performance then they should be given the autonomy to address performance issues** - the envisaged degree of accountability and supervision is excessive;
- **Role of GTC has been omitted** – in particular their publication 'Teaching the Reflective Profession';
- **Provision of clear unambiguous reports on individual schools** - there is a case for reviewing the format of inspection reports to reflect the Quality Indicators;
- **Quality of support provided by ESA** - those involved at ESA/ELB level must have professional experience – in the classroom and in educational management;
- **The interface between the roles of ETI and ESA requires clarification** - Concern over the separate roles of ESA and ETI – how will they compliment without duplicating? Disagree with ETI responsibilities being subsumed within ESA;
- **There does not appear to be any allowance for special schools within this policy;**
- **Role of sectoral bodies** - role should be clarified; It is unclear what sectoral bodies will exist and how they will interface with ESA, ETI and DE;

- **Essential that school leaders have significant input into how these roles are carried out** - to ensure that ESA/DE are meeting the needs of schools;
- A **'Closing the Gap' strategy** is needed that narrows the gap between the attainment of children from poorer backgrounds and their more affluent peers;
- **The roles and responsibilities as defined in the document are manifestly unclear** – there would appear to be a significant overlap in the roles of DE, ESA and ETI and in particular the role of ETI seems to have been marginalised;
- **Role of HEI's, as they contribute to both initial and ongoing staff training and development has been completely ignored;**
- **ESA, when established, ELBs, BoG and school leaders should be trained in good relations and equality;**
- **Roles and responsibilities of children and young people in relation to school improvement should be outlined in this section;**
- **Boards of Governors** - doubtful if many BoG could successfully shoulder all of the responsibilities heaped upon them; curious that a non-professional body should be expected to act largely on the professional judgements of others – perhaps it would be more appropriate for ESA to take the decisive actions?. BoG need to be given the ability not just to hire but also to fire. Increasing responsibility and accountability without this fundamental right undermines the role of governors;
- **The approach is too much 'top-down' and gives the impression of a wish to exercise control;**
- **The recognition that the school has the primary responsibility is welcome but much of the rest of the chapter implies that the Department does not really believe it.**

Question 5: Do you agree that the actions identified to facilitate self-evaluation and school development planning are appropriate and/or necessary?

79% of respondents agreed that the actions identified were appropriate; 21% disagreed.

General Comments

- Any **training package** designed for school leadership should be designed with significant input at all levels from practising school leaders and delivery of training should be undertaken by staff with recent school leadership experience;
- School principals are currently still coming to terms with the extensive requirements of the last **review of the requirements of SDP's** – it therefore appears premature to make changes again. However where changes are to be introduced school leaders should be fully involved in devising any new model;
- Many aspects of the **self evaluation process** will prove difficult, if not impossible, to quantify and measure. Yet the mechanisms presented are clearly skewed in favour of the quantifiable aspects;
- Integral to improvement is a **commitment to staff development**. This should include an engagement with research – informed – practice through the involvement of HEIs in CPD provision and accreditation;
- Special schools concerned that there will be a **reduction in the quality of specialised training and support available**; Any staff being appointed to support special schools in this area must have the appropriate knowledge and background in Special Education;
- **School development planning** could be much easier to manage if the financial year corresponded to the school year;
- Strongly recommend the use of an IT/software package which could be then used as a template by all schools for **school development planning**;
- **Initial teacher training** needs to be looked at urgently. It is unacceptable for teachers entering the profession to be totally unaware of the Revised Curriculum – it is also extremely worrying that people responsible for training future teachers have had little or no classroom experience in the last 10-20 years;
- **Staff supporting schools** should be appropriately trained and have relevant experience;

- **Training packages** on their own don't work – need to develop sustainable ongoing support;
- Schools have been using publications on **self-evaluation** (Together Towards Improvement) and **school development planning**. It would be prudent to revise these documents that schools are familiar with rather than introduce completely new materials;
- **Scope of SDP** should be reduced to include a small number of achievable, meaningful and fundamentally worthwhile improvement strategies;
- **Clear links need to be made between Initial Teacher Training, Induction, EPD, CPD etc.** In this way all parties will have a clear focus regarding their common aim – to make even better learning opportunities and outcomes for their children;
- This must not be set up under the existing structure of ELBs. If it is important then it should be done properly i.e. as **one of the first roles of ESA**;
- In particular there is a real need for **high quality professional development opportunities for middle managers and for senior leadership teams**;
- The **proposed school improvement professional** needs to be a person of some standing who can command the respect and confidence of the school concerned.

Question 6: Do you agree that the actions identified to improve leadership in schools are appropriate and/or necessary? Are there any others?

73% of respondents agreed that the actions identified were appropriate; 27% disagreed.

Suggested Additions

- There should be a mandatory requirement for all **new Principals** to gain a **leadership qualification** within 3 years of taking up the post;
- Review **SMT pay structure** to offer salaries commensurate with the enormous level of responsibility;
- Ensure **pay differentials between VPs and UPS3 teachers** in order to attract high quality leaders;
- **Handbook** must be supported by quality training which is properly funded.

General Comments

Principals:

- **Insisting that new principals have a leadership/management qualification is not in itself going to solve the problem** – it would be much more valuable to promote and advertise leadership and management programmes within schools;
- **DE should consider introducing a mandatory induction period for new principals** – i.e. one where they can shadow existing principals and enter a mentoring programme;
- **Effective development programmes are needed for middle management** - ESA should also be providing support for developing middle-management skills as well;
- **Entry to PQH NI should be more stringent** – candidates should have an absolute minimum of 7 years teaching experience before even being considered for their course;
- **Develop a career structure for school leaders.** Appoint them centrally, move them every 7 years and exploit the strengths they develop as a result of their exposure to a range of situations;
- **Review of PRSD scheme for principals.** It doesn't fulfill requirements. An external advisor who only meets you twice a year maximum is not a support to either the BoG or Principal;
- **There is an increasing problem with recruitment and retention of school leaders at all levels within many schools** - increased effective support for serving Principals is particularly needed;
- **Staff in schools should be able to access a continuum of pedagogic and leadership training** to include: initial teacher training; beginning

teacher/induction/early professional development; CPD including PQL; PQH; new principal induction; progressive programme of skills training for governors;

- **The early and continuing professional development of teachers should be taken forward in a professional manner embracing the 27 competences provided by the GTCNI** which enhance teaching as a profession;
- **DE/RTU to produce an IME specific ‘leadership toolbox’ with guidance on issues relating to IME;**
- **A style of leadership must be promulgated that is congruent with professional communities of practice** – strong autocratic leadership will undermine the desired school improvement this policy hopes to bring about;
- **Review PQH model externally** – does it make sense to put so many resources into ‘training’ teachers who may never become Heads, rather than into development and support of those who have been appointed? Is a ‘qualification’ gained some years ago an appropriate requirement for appointment?
- **Disagreement on issue of PQH becoming a mandatory qualification** – some respondents object to this proposals whilst others endorse it;
- **No reference to the Performance Review School Development scheme in schools and its direct link with professional development;**
- **Care should be taken not to exclude existing Principals who have proven leadership and management skills and who may not have PQH**, who might be precluded from moving from one post to a new post if it were a requirement;
- **A review of the scope and content of the existing leadership and management programmes is essential;**
- Insufficient recognition of the variety of sources of leadership and management development. **HEI providers of ITE are already engaged in the provision of challenging programmes** based on sound theoretical practice;
- **Initial teacher education should include leadership training and continue through CPD.**

Board of Governors

- **Welcome new handbook for school governors but have doubts about its capacity to improve overall performance** – crucial question is how to

enroll more high quality governors who are keenly interested and are prepared to accept all of the duties and responsibilities;

- **Although a new handbook for school Governors would be useful it should be compulsory that Governors receive training** in setting standards, monitoring performance and ensuring effective teaching and learning in the context of the revised curriculum is achieved;
- **BoG will be reconstituted next year.** Members will not be in a position to take on the roles specified – many will have no background in education or performance review.
- **Governors are to be given a much enhanced role which may well bring them into conflict with the professionals who work in the school.** Those who are prepared to take on this role should receive high quality training, financial remuneration and go through a selection process;
- **New governors handbook should take into account the roles of governors depending on the type of school it is** (e.g. role of governor at a GMI school).

Question 7: Do you agree that the actions identified to improve the involvement of parents and the community are appropriate and/or necessary?

75% of respondents agreed with the actions identified; 25% disagreed.

General Comments

- **It should be recognised that not all parents are prepared to give the level of involvement required;**
- **There is an absence of proposals on how to reach the already disadvantaged, hard-to-reach parents;**
- **Greater need for all government departments to work together to address the needs of families.** Health, education and the role of social services – their policies should be connected;
- **The term ‘parents/guardians’ should be used rather than just parents, more encompassing for all circumstances;**
- **Good practice from the extended schools programme should be disseminated widely and appropriately resourced;**
- **A publicity/media campaign to inform parents of the difference their involvement can make to their children’s education/socialisation etc...;**
- **Schools which already find from their own budgets an extensive extended schools programme which attracts the involvement of parents and the community are being discriminated against by being excluded from the funding available in the Extended Schools Programme;**
- **Many schools do not have the resources or buildings to provide an extended programme;**
- **There are no proposals to empower parents as a collective body.** The establishment of a sectoral support body for parents might be a good start in redressing this imbalance;
- **Section needs to be expanded to make much more explicit the potential roles and contributions that parents and the community might make towards raising achievement in schools;**
- **DE should carry out research into increasing opportunities for parental and community involvement in schools.** ESA will then be required to help schools develop action plans relevant to the individual school and circumstances;

- **Emphasis is placed firmly on the school's responsibilities to parents and very little is placed on parents responsibilities to support the work being done in school to educate their child/children.** This gives cause for concern and suggests a one-sided partnership.

Question 8: Do you agree with the actions intended to be taken to improve the use of data in schools?

71% of respondents agreed with the actions proposed; 29% disagreed.

General Comments

- **Target setting within schools for children with special learning difficulties is not appropriate** due to the highly individualised nature of each school population;
- **Much greater emphasis should be placed on the crucial role good pastoral care plays in the emotional health and wellbeing and ultimate success of pupils;**
- **Need a broad set of criteria which will determine how value added is identified and measured;**
- **Appropriate training for teachers, governors etc in effective use of data/target setting etc is necessary;**
- **The use of data for improving performance should be an integral part of any programme of initial teacher training;**
- **Over-reliance on data and league table proposals masks the importance of the pupil.** Primarily focusing on target setting and benchmarking could be detrimental to their academic and emotional development;
- **Good effective assessment tools are urgently needed in IME in order to facilitate standardized testing.** IM schools need a wider range of such tools similar to that available in the English medium sector;
- **Very difficult to identify a rigorous set of indicators for NI primary schools in the absence of externally set and marked assessments;**
- **The dissemination of good practice within and between schools is important and support the creation of a research and good practice website.** LNI can help support this work, but we must also be open to a sharing of ideas across the wider educational landscape that the internet provides access to;
- **There is a need to recognise individual school circumstances;**
- **A more reliable factor than FSM must be found if this is to work.** Without this it will be difficult to effectively process a fair and equitable system for all children in all schools;

- **Base lining pupils across the key stages is a specific challenge that schools will have to face.** There must be a transfer of accurate and reliable pupil data from primary to post-primary schools;
- **Quality indicators should form basis for school self evaluation and also for inspection** – this means that the ‘outcome of inspection’ becomes a strategic comment rather than a narrow indicator;
- **How would a common set of performance indicators be applied to each school;** be appropriately weighted and take account of the extraneous social and environmental influences?
- **Recognise the importance and value of self-evaluation however express concern around the obvious time and finance involved in collating and analysing the information required;**
- **ESA should establish a benchmarking system using target driven data that supports a ‘closing the gap strategy’;**
- **If collaboration will be required in order to deliver the entitlement framework, then why is there no consideration of performance measures which will seek to identify the impact of and perhaps even encourage collaborative practice?**
- **These proposed actions are neither appropriate nor necessary in the light of the present ETI quality indicators in ‘Together Towards Improvement’** – these indicators should be reviewed and applied consistently by all stakeholders.

Question 9: Do you agree that there should be a common set of indicators of performance and context for each school?

75% of respondents agreed that there should be a common set of performance/context indicators; 25% disagreed.

General Comments

- **The proposals will force schools to focus on those things which are measurable to the detriment of those broader value related aspects of schools:** e.g. educational visit etc.
- **The document is too obsessed with data** – which leads to a lack of emphasis on providing high quality teaching and effective learning;
- **Use of contextual information must be part of any school improvement policy;**
- **This document is heavily weighted in favour of quantitative data** when the revised curriculum will require schools to think of learning and teaching more holistically which should result in evaluation, assessment and data becoming more qualitative;
- **Schools are all different and a ‘common set’ is unlikely to make sense.** A set from which indicators can be chosen and at various levels etc may be workable;
- **Continued concentration on these types of indicators requires teachers time to be spent on data but for teaching to become more effective and efficient more time needs to be spent with the pupils not on bureaucracy which neither adds to nor improves the teaching environment;**
- **The indicators need to be closely related to the characteristics developed;**
- **The creation and agreement of appropriate indicators needs to involve school leaders and BoG;**
- **Such indicators should not be used on a raw data basis for comparison purposes.**

Question 10: Do you agree with the initial set of indicators for primary and post-primary schools?

64% of respondents agreed with the initial set of indicators; 36% disagreed.

Suggested Additions

- **Leadership;**
- **Value added measure;**
- **The ethos of the school as indicated by the quality of care and pastoral provision and support for pupils;**
- **Pupil emotional health and well-being;**
- **Effective school councils;**
- **Social balance of school intake;**
- **Pupil behaviour;**
- **Careers development;**
- **Evidence of inclusion and diversity;**
- **Evidence of outreach, cross community work;**
- **Evidence of dissemination of good practice beyond school;**
- **Evidence of pupil voice;**
- **Levels of parent and community engagement;**
- **Levels of sustainability, carbon footprint issues;**
- **Levels of promotion of healthy lifestyles;**
- **Evidence of support for at risk children and children with emotional issues;**
- **Data on pupils 1, 2, and 3 years after leaving;**
- **Early school dropouts.**

General Comments

- **Schools are all different and a ‘common set’ is unlikely to make sense.** A set from which indicators can be chosen and at various levels etc may be workable;
- **Pastoral care needs to be given a higher priority;**
- **Needs to be further consultation in order to determine the best and most appropriate indicators;**
- **Accommodation; attendance; uptake of extra curricular activities are all outside control of school;**
- **A pilot scheme must be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the suggested indicators and must be changed if it is found not to be working.** This must encompass a wide range of schools in a variety of social, economic and academic contexts;
- **Specific support and guidance would need to be tailored to address nursery issues;**
- **Strongly disagree with many of these indicators;**

- **Disagree with the use of levels of suspensions and expulsions.** Only legitimately upheld complaints against schools can be included in any indicators that use a complaints indicator;
- **There is a need to clearly identify baseline measures re: social deprivation/pupil intake etc..** if value added measures are to be effective in measuring or evaluating the effectiveness of schools;
- **Current indicators are more appropriate for post primary;**
- **An agreed mechanism for assessing performance in primary schools is vital;**
- **More specific emphasis on the nursery sector needed;**
- **No indicator which directly mentions leadership** – this seems to contradict earlier characteristics and principles within the document;
- **An understanding of ‘collaborative arrangements’ must take cognisance of the geographic spread and nature of IME;**
- **Greater emphasis on pupil welfare needed;**
- **Concerned about using ‘complaints against a school’ all organisations receive adverse criticism.** How will the validity of complaints be assessed?
- **Vital that attainment levels of hearing impaired young people are collected and that service standards and qualitative indicators be developed for the teaching of hearing impaired young people in order to inform school improvement;**
- **Include comparative attainment indicators for hearing impaired children against their hearing peers.** Each school should be able to measure the impact of its teaching on hearing impaired young people;
- **The set of indicators should be the outworkings of the clearly stated vision – why can these not be based on the 8 EU competences to which all EU governments agreed?**
- **Concerned some of the indicators are very subjective** e.g. ongoing relationship difficulties within the school;
- **DE should rank the indicators so that a school’s performance will reflect a weighted score derived from the various indicators** - some indicators are more important than others e.g. ‘performance in public exams’ is more important than ‘quality of accommodation’
- **Concerned at the limited evidence of the policy’s child-centred approach being present in the quality indicators.**

Depts, ELBs & CCMS, Teacher Unions, Managing Authorities, Statutory Bodies and Business Organisations

1. Association of Teachers and Lectures NI (ATL)
2. BELB (Gerry McGuinness)
3. CCMS (Jim Clarke)
4. Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (GNAG)
5. Community Relations Council
6. Department for Employment and Learning (DEL)
7. Department for Social Development (DSD)
8. General Teaching Council Northern Ireland (GTCNI)
9. Governing Bodies Association
10. INTO (Carrickfergus/Newtownabbey/Larne Branch)
11. INTO (District Committee 1)
12. INTO (Frank Bunting)
13. Institute of Directors (IoD)
14. Invest Northland Ireland
15. Labour Relations Agency
16. National Association of Head Teachers NI (NAHT)
17. National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)
18. NEELB (Gordon Topping)
19. NI Assembly Education Committee
20. Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY)
21. NIPSA
22. SEELB (Alice Lennon)
23. The Association of Principals of Integrated Schools (APTIS)
24. Transfer Representatives Council (TRC)
25. Ulster Teachers' Union
26. WELB/SELB (Paddy Mackey)

Grammar Schools

27. Abbey Christian Brothers GS 542-0059
28. Aquinas Diocesan GS 142-0277
29. Antrim GS 341-0209
30. Banbridge Academy 541-0013
31. Cambridge House GS 341-0297
32. Cambridge House GS 341-0297 - additional response
33. Down HS 441-0085
34. Enniskillen Collegiate GS 241-0040
35. Glenlola Collegiate GS 441-0097
36. Grosvenor GS 141-0079
37. Hunterhouse College 142-0265
38. Loreto College, Coleraine 342-0034
39. Methodist College 142-0022
40. Portadown College 541-0067

41. Rainey Endowed School
42. St Colman's College, Newry 542-0062
43. St Louis GS, Kilkeel 542-0045
44. St Patrick's Academy 542-0304
45. Sullivan Upper School 442-0044
46. The Royal Belfast Academical Institute (RBAI) 142-0027
47. The Royal Belfast Academical Institute (RBAI) 142-0027 – additional response
48. The Royal School Armagh 542-0263
49. Thornhill College 242-0052
50. Victoria College, Belfast 142-0264
51. Wallace HS 442-0051

Non-selective Schools

52. Aghnacloy College 521-0153
53. Brownlow Integrated College 525-0216
54. Castle HS 121-0258
55. City of Armagh HS 521-0121
56. Clounagh Junior HS, Portadown 521-0043
57. Cookstown HS 521-0230
58. Crumlin Integrated College 325-0149
59. Donaghadee HS 421-0031
60. Dromore HS 521-0064
61. Drumglass HS, Dungannon 521-0231
62. Dunclug College 321-0208
63. Dunmurry HS 421-0194
64. Fort Hill College 425-0072
65. Glengormley HS 321-0202
66. Integrated College Dungannon 526-0286
67. Killicomaine Junior HS, Portadown 521-0054
68. Larne HS 321-0038
69. Limavady HS 221-0302
70. Little Flower Girls' School 123-0089
71. Newry HS 521-0186
72. Oakgrove College 226-0276
73. Omagh HS 221-0125
74. Our Lady of Mercy Girls' School, Belfast 123-0104
75. Priority Integrated College 425-0024
76. St Benedicts College, Randalstown 323-0308
77. St Brigids HS, Armagh 523-0160
78. St Colmcille's HS 423-0102
79. St Columban's College, Kilkeel 523-0059
80. St Comhghall's College, Lisnaskea 223-0190
81. St Gemma's HS, Belfast 123-0173
82. St Joseph's Boys' School, Londonderry 223-0131
83. St Joseph's Boys' HS, Newry 523-0056
84. St Joseph's Boys' HS, Newry 523-0056 – additional response
85. St Mark's HS, Warrenpoint 523-0135
86. St Mary's HS, Downpatrick 423-0023
87. St Mary's HS, Londonderry 223-0081

88. St Mary's HS, Newry 523-0108
89. St Peter's HS, Londonderry 223-0181
90. St Paul's Junior HS, Lurgan 523-088

Special Schools

91. Ceara Special School 531-6521
92. Donard Special School 531-6520
93. Kilronan Special School 331-6570
94. Roddensvale Special School 331-6514
95. Tor Bank Special School 431-6517

Primary Schools

96. Anahilt PS 401-1608
97. Armstrong PS 501-1115
98. Ballinderry PS 401-6202
99. Ballycraigy PS 301-3331
100. Ballylifford PS 503-2208
101. Ballynure PS 301-0802
102. Blessed Patrick O'Loughran PS 503-2463
103. Bocombra PS 501-6138
104. Bunscoil Cholmcille, Londonderry 203-6574
105. Bunscoil an Iúir, Newry 504-6597
106. Bush PS 501-6391
107. Carr PS 401-1584
108. Carrick PS 503-1609
109. Christ the Redeemer 403-6618
110. Clea PS 503-1108
111. Cooley PS 201-6663
112. Donacloney 501-6178
113. Dundonald PS 401-1587
114. Dromara PS 401-1619
115. Drumadonnell PS 501-6616
116. Gaelscoil Ui Dhochartaigh, Strabane 204-6638
117. Glencraig Integrated PS 405-3020
118. Glenwood PS 101-6485
119. Grange Park PS, 401-3045
120. Greenwood PS 101-0304
121. Holy Cross Boys' PS 103-0194
122. Holy Family PS, Downpatrick 403-3012
123. Holy Family PS, Londonderry 203-6472
124. Holy Trinity PS, Cookstown 503-6567
125. Lisbellaw PS 201-6218
126. Maralin Village PS 501-1687
127. Nettlefield PS 101-0267
128. Olderfleet PS 301-0646
129. Orritor PS 501-6221
130. Our Lady Queen of Peace PS, Belfast 403-6591
131. Recarson PS 203-2704
132. St Anthony's PS, Larne 303-0900
133. St Brendan's PS, Craigavon 503-6101

134. St Brigid's PS, Downpatrick 403-3040
135. St Bronagh's PS, Rostrevor 503-6673
136. St Caolan's PS, Ballynahinch 403-1485
137. St Clare's Convent PS, Newry 503-1213
138. St Colmcille's PS, Downpatrick 403-6182
139. St Colman's Bann PS, Craigavon 503-6400
140. St Colman's PS, Banbridge 503-6061
141. St Dallan's PS
142. St Dympna's PS, Dromore 203-6186
143. St Joseph's PS, Belfast 103-6246
144. St Joseph's PS, Crumlin 303-6026
145. St Joseph's PS, Ballymena 303-6243
146. St Kieran's PS, Belfast 403-6480
147. St Malachy's PS, Coleraine 303-2297
148. St Malachy's PS, Dungannon 503-2306
149. St Mary's PS, Claudy 203-2294
150. St Mary's PS, Dunsford 403-1673
151. St Mary's PS, Granmore 503-1172
152. St Mary's PS, Tempo 203-6356
153. St Nicholas' PS, Ardglass 403-6113
154. St Patrick's PS, Donaghmore 503-2678
155. St Patrick's PS, Mayobridge 503-1697
156. St Patrick's PS, Ballynahinch 403-1665
157. St Teresa's PS, Lurgan 503-1160
158. Tandragee PS 501-1116
159. Templepatrick PS, 301-6014
160. The Cope PS 501-6079
161. Victoria PS 301-3330

Nursery Schools

162. Convent of Mercy Nursery School 413-6212
163. The Academy Nursery School 211-6023

District Councils and others

164. Agencies in Consortium for Education and Training (ACET)
165. Antrim Borough Council
166. Ards Borough Council
167. Association of Chief Librarians (Helen Osborn)
168. Ballymena Borough Council
169. BELB (David Ryan – SEN & Inclusion Advisor)
170. BELB Extended School Inter-board Group
171. Confederation of British Industry's (CBI)
172. Children in Northern Ireland (CINI)
173. Children's Law Centre
174. Craigavon Borough Council
175. Disability Action
176. Down District Council
177. Down District Council – additional response
178. Economic Research Institute of Northern Ireland (ERINI)
179. Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

180. Fermanagh Principals Group - (Mr F Murphy, chairman)
181. Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland (HPA)
182. Help the Aged
183. Holy Family Parish Social Justice Committee
184. Institute of Public Health in Ireland
185. Limavady Borough Council
186. Lisburn City Council
187. National Deaf Children's Society
188. Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA)
189. Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission (NIJAC)
190. NSPCC
191. Regional Training Union (RTU)
192. Save The Children
193. SELB Post-primary Principals Association Steering Group
(David Mehaffey, chairman)
194. Sir Bob Salisbury – chairman of Literacy & Numeracy Taskforce
195. Strabane District Council
196. Stranmillis University College
197. The British Psychological Society
198. University of Ulster

Personal Responses

199. Florence Brunt
200. Mrs SE Douglas (primary school teacher)
201. Prof Tony Gallagher School of Education Queens University
202. Robert Gilmore (principal)
203. Dr Ana M Kerr