



Press Release

GTCNI RESPONDS TO ONGOING DEBATE ON THE OPPORTUNITIES AFFORDED TO NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS.

23rd January 2006

The General Teaching Council today responded to ongoing debate on the issue of student teachers and the employment of unqualified teachers. The Registrar of GTCNI Eddie McArdle said,

“The Council is most concerned at the difficulties facing newly qualified teachers and, in 2005, made recommendations on this issue to the Department of Education.

He continued,

“GTCNI has asked that consideration be given to the introduction of a guaranteed period of employment for all newly qualified teachers, as a means of ensuring that such teachers can complete their induction process and gain a degree of classroom experience. Such a scheme currently operates very successfully in Scotland and was a key recommendation of the 2004 Curran Report.”

Reflecting on the benefits of such a strategy he noted,

“The introduction of such a scheme would not only benefit our new teachers but would offer schools an increased flexibility of staffing at a time when there is increased pressure in regard to issues such as curriculum change, school development planning and PRSD.”

Turning to the issue of unqualified teachers he said,

“The Council’s position in regard to this is that no one should be employed to teach children unless they are a qualified and registered teacher. The situation with respect to permanent posts in schools is clear; one cannot hold such a post without being registered with the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland, The circumstances surrounding substitute teachers is more flexible and can result in schools employing unqualified staff for a limited period where they can demonstrate that no qualified teacher was available. GTCNI will seek a review of the outworking of this process to ascertain if the maintenance of such a process is justified.”

Ends

For further Press Information please contact Mark Mc Laughlin Public Relations Officer.

Tel: (028) 90348791

Fax: (028) 90348787

Email: mmclaughlin@gtcni.org.uk

Notes to the Editor

ABOUT THE GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

The General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland is the statutory, independent body for the teaching profession and is dedicated to enhancing the status of teaching and promoting the highest standards of professional conduct and practice.

It works in partnership to develop and sustain a broad "professional community" characterised by a culture of respect, integrity, cooperation and dialogue.

Council's Profile and Core Activities

Established under the auspices of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, the

Council has a membership of 33, the majority of whom are teachers. The Council is constituted as follows: 14 members are elected directly by the profession with a further 5 members nominated by the Northern Ireland Teaching Council. In addition, 10 members are nominated by broader interests within education including the Higher Education Institutions, Employing Authorities and other agencies. There are also 4 members appointed by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland.

The Council's responsibilities as set out in the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, Articles 34-41, are as follows:

- The registration of teachers.
- The development of a Code of Professional Values and Practice for the profession.
- Disciplinary functions relating to professional misconduct.
- The provision of advice to the Department of Education and Employing Authorities on:
 - The training, career development and performance management of teachers.
 - Standards of teaching.
 - Registration issues.
 - Standards of conduct for teachers.
 - Other issues such as may be determined by the Department of Education

Curran Report

Common title given to the “Teachers’ pay and conditions of Service Inquiry” chaired by Mr Sean Curran CBE.

EDDIE McARDLE

Eddie McArdle started his teaching career in Belfast at St Paul's Secondary School for Boys in 1972.

In 1975 he moved to St Louise's Comprehensive College, an all girls' school of over two thousand pupils. During his time there he held a variety of curricular, pastoral and management posts.

In 1990 he was seconded to the Belfast Education & Library Board to develop the Board's first LMS scheme and in 1992 was appointed by BELB as an Adviser for School Management.

In 1993 he was appointed Deputy Chief Executive of the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and remained with CCMS until October 2002, when he was appointed Registrar of the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland.

A long time apologist for the profession, he believes that the broad political agenda of the last decade has done much to erode the status of teachers in the UK as a whole and his mission and that of GTCNI is to help redress the imbalance and restore the profession to its rightful place in the eyes of society at large.

He has been a member of a number of Regional bodies and working groups, including the Management Board of Classroom 2000, the Council of CCEA and the Northern Ireland Advisory Group of the Royal National Institute for the Deaf.