



01.10.05

GTCNI – Coming Soon To A Venue Near You!

Northern Ireland's 26,000 teachers – one of the province's largest workforces – will, for the first time, have the opportunity to communicate directly with the organisation which represents their professional interests.

The General Teaching Council for NI (GTCNI) is offering teachers the chance to attend information seminars, which will allow for open and frank debate on issues affecting the teaching profession today. Starting with the first seminar in Belfast on the 17th October, and running to the 30th November at venues across N. Ireland, the seminars come at an important stage in the Council's development.

“Over the past two years we have been working behind the scenes to clarify the main issues impacting on the profession, and have just completed the first comprehensive Register of some 26,000 teachers,” said Eddie McArdle, Registrar of GTCNI. “With the Register now in place, it is appropriate that we now go out and meet with those we represent, and explore the way forward.”

In addition to providing an update on the Council's goals and objectives, the seminars represent an opportunity for the profession to discuss key issues including the forthcoming Council elections, the concept of professionally-led regulation and the implications for teachers of the current climate of accountability.

Eddie McArdle added “we relish this opportunity to meet with our fellow professionals in their local areas. I would urge all teachers to attend these seminars as we certainly value their opinions and welcome their feedback.”

The seminars will take place at the following venues;

- The Holiday Inn, 22 Ormeau Avenue, Belfast, Co Antrim on 17th October 2005 at 4.30pm
- The Leighinmohr House Hotel, Leighinmohr Avenue, Ballymena, Co Antrim on 26th October 2005 at 4.30pm

- The Armagh City Hotel, 2 Friary Road, Armagh, Co Armagh on 7th November 2005 at 4.30pm
- The Everglades Hotel, Prehen Road, Derry, Co Londonderry on 23rd November 2005 at 4.30pm
- The Killyhevlin Hotel, Killyhevlin, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh on 30th November 2005 at 4.30pm

Ends

For further information contact Mark McLaughlin at GTCNI on 028 9034 8791.

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

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.