

**Policy Forum for Northern Ireland Keynote Seminar: Next steps for sustainable schools policy: implementing area plans, increasing collaboration and improving leadership**

Timing: Morning, Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2018

Venue: Belfast



**POLICY FORUM  
FOR NORTHERN  
IRELAND**

Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 - 9.00 Registration and coffee
- 9.00 - 9.05 **Chair's opening remarks**  
**Peter Weir MLA**, Northern Ireland Assembly
- 9.05 - 9.35 **Next steps in area plans: progress, lessons and priorities for the future**  
**John Collings**, Director of Education, Education Authority  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.35 - 10.35 **Realising the aims of the area plans: meeting local need, the future for collaboration and financial sustainability**  
*What are the options that schools currently facing sustainability issues could pursue and what strategies could be adopted by those smaller schools outside Belfast and large urban areas in particular; what are the key challenges and opportunities presented by different approaches? How can schools be supported to collaborate, and to share and implement good practice; what steps can be taken to ensure that partnerships are durable and deliver positive outcomes for schools and pupils? To what extent might greater community involvement improve the financial sustainability of schools, for example through making school facilities available for community organisations outside of school hours? Where school facilities are not fit-for-purpose, how can schools be supported to help bring them in line with expected standards, and how might this be financed?*  
**Professor Tony Gallagher**, Acting Head of School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work, Queen's University Belfast  
**Jayne Thompson**, Programmes Manager, Parent Teacher Association Northern Ireland  
Senior representative, schools body  
Senior representative, school  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.35 - 10.40 **Chair's closing remarks**  
**Peter Weir MLA**, Northern Ireland Assembly
- 10.40 - 11.10 Coffee
- 11.10 - 11.15 **Chair's opening remarks**  
Senior Member of the Legislative Assembly
- 11.15 - 11.25 **Priorities in the development of effective school leadership**  
Senior commentator
- 11.25 - 12.25 **Ensuring access to high-quality education: teaching provision, school leadership and educational sustainability**  
*What is the latest thinking on how the challenges currently faced by teachers can be addressed - especially in smaller and more rural schools with composite classes? What steps can be taken to help improve standards and encourage further sustainability, particularly in regard to further specialised training and continuing professional development? What incentives can be put in place to encourage outstanding teachers and school leaders to join schools that have more room for improvement, or are based in more remote locations? What further action can be taken to develop school leadership to ensure that schools are given the opportunities to improve standards, and are best placed to implement reforms? How can greater cooperation and communication between school governors, leaders, staff, pupils and local stakeholders be promoted, and where good practice exists, how can it be rolled out more widely? In an ever-changing school environment, what further assistance can be given to teachers and staff to improve their health, wellbeing and morale, and to adapt teaching and pastoral methods, which in turn will enhance provision for pupils?*  
**Dermot Mullan**, Principal, Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock and President, Association of School and College Leaders NI  
**Kathleen O'Hare**, Principal, Hazelwood Integrated College, Newtownabbey  
**Justin McCamphill**, National Official, Northern Ireland, NASUWT  
Senior representative, continuing professional development  
Questions and comments from the floor with senior commentator
- 12.25 - 12.55 **Next steps in education policy in Northern Ireland**  
Senior representative, policy  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 - 13.00 **Chair's and Policy Forum for Northern Ireland closing remarks**  
Senior Member of the Legislative Assembly  
**Sean Cudmore**, Deputy Editor, Policy Forum for Northern Ireland