

**Policy Forum for Northern Ireland Keynote Seminar**  
**Key issues for education in Northern Ireland: area plan implementation, effective collaboration and improving leadership**

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

Venue: Radisson Blu Hotel, The Gasworks, 3 Cromac Place, Ormeau Road, Belfast BT7 2JB



**POLICY FORUM  
FOR NORTHERN  
IRELAND**

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 - 10.40 **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? In light of the latest news that school budgets are to be reduced, what options are available to schools to meet the needs of pupils within spending limits? 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**, Director of Research at the School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work, Queen's University Belfast  
**Dr Graham Gault**, Principal, Maghaberry Primary School and Nursery Unit  
**Jayne Thompson**, Programmes Manager, Parent Teacher Association Northern Ireland  
**Peter Bryson**, Head of Country, Northern Ireland, Save the Children  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.40 - 10.45 **Chair's closing remarks**  
**Peter Weir MLA**, Northern Ireland Assembly
- 10.45 - 11.15 Coffee
- 11.15 - 11.20 **Chair's opening remarks**  
**Chris Lyttle MLA**, Northern Ireland Assembly
- 11.20 - 11.45 **Sustainable schools and school management: the NI Audit Office perspective**  
**Kieran Donnelly**, Comptroller and Auditor General, Northern Ireland Audit Office  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.45 - 11.55 **Priorities in the development of effective school leadership**  
**Dr Sam McGuinness**, Course Director, Master's Level Leadership and Headship Courses, School of Education, Ulster University
- 11.55 - 12.55 **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? 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?*  
**Dr Patricia Eaton**, Director of Teaching and Learning, Stranmillis University College, Belfast  
**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  
Questions and comments from the floor with **Dr Sam McGuinness**, Course Director, Master's Level Leadership and Headship Courses, School of Education, Ulster University
- 12.55 - 13.00 **Chair's and Policy Forum for Northern Ireland closing remarks**  
**Chris Lyttle MLA**, Northern Ireland Assembly  
**Roger Greer**, Senior Researcher, Policy Forum for Northern Ireland