

**Policy Forum for Northern Ireland keynote seminar:
Next steps for the education system in Northern Ireland**

Timing: Morning, Wednesday, 15th January 2025

Taking place online



Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Pat Sheehan MLA, Deputy Chair, Committee for Education
- 9.05 **Investing in early childhood education as a means for early intervention**
Pauline Walmsley, CEO, Early Years
- 9.15 **Priorities for tackling educational disadvantage and improving outcomes**
implementing recommendations outlined in the Independent Review of Education | socio-economic and gender attainment gaps | disparity between schools | vulnerable learners | impacts of the pandemic | tackling barriers to progression in education | alternative provision | learner well-being
Emma Shaw, Executive Director, Phoenix Education Centre
Susan Morgan, Principal Investigator, Taking Boys Seriously, Ulster University
Amanda McNamee, Principal, Lagan College
Barry Corr, Principal, Seaview Primary School, Glenarm
Senior speaker confirmed from SEN Reform NI
- 9.40 Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.10 **Chair's closing remarks**
Pat Sheehan MLA, Deputy Chair, Committee for Education
- 10.15 Break
- 10.25 **Chair's opening remarks**
Cara Hunter MLA, Member, Committee for Education
- 10.30 **Key recommendations from the Independent Review of Education and assessing the Department of Education's response**
Dr Keir Bloomer, Chairperson, Independent Review of Education
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.00 **Priorities for the Curriculum Review in Northern Ireland**
Lucy Crehan, Lead, Curriculum Review in Northern Ireland
- 11.10 **Assessing the future of qualifications in Northern Ireland**
Senior representative, qualifications
- 11.20 **Options for curriculum reform, widening educational pathways and managing the transition period**
curriculum review and developing an updated curriculum | separation of CCEA curriculum and assessment functions | priorities for a Curriculum Council | potential impact of raising the age of compulsory education to 18 | opening vocational pathways from age 14 | ensuring qualifications meet the needs of learners and employers | reforming the Careers Service | widening measurements of assessment | limiting academic selection for post-primary transition
Professor Daniel Muijs, Head, School, Social Sciences, Education, Social Work, Queen's University Belfast
Diane Hill, CEO, Include Youth
Dr Karen Orr, Research Fellow, Centre for Research in Educational Underachievement, Stranmillis University College
Senior representative, FE college
- 11.40 Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.05 **Priorities for the teaching workforce moving forward**
priorities for developing a workforce strategy | teacher training | staff retention | review of the Jordanstown Agreement | bolstering continuous professional development | establishing an Education Workforce Council
J. A. Maxwell, Principal, Carrickfergus Grammar School
Professor Martin Hagan, Head of Education, St Mary's University College
Mark Bain, Education Correspondent, Belfast Telegraph
Senior representative, union
Senior representative, union
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **The future of the education system in Northern Ireland**
Paul Givan MLA, Minister of Education, Northern Ireland Executive
Questions and comments from the floor
- 13.25 **Chair's and Policy Forum for Northern Ireland closing remarks**
Cara Hunter MLA, Member, Committee for Education
Sean Cudmore, Policy Forum for Northern Ireland