

MEETING WITH COMHAIRLE Na GAELSCOLAIOCHTA (C Na G) on 20 May 2002

Seán Ó Coinn - Príomhfheidhmeannach (Chief Executive Officer)
Eilís Uí Néill - Cathaoirleach Fochoiste Oideachais (Chairperson
Education Sub-Committee)
Aedín Ní Ghadhra - Oifigeach Sinsearach Oideachais (Senior Education
Officer)

Minister
Mark Browne
Des Whyte
Conor McParland

General Comments

Seán Ó Coinn

- Favourably disposed to Burns although a number of concerns about the detail – provides a real opportunity for IM sector to have a system which suits them in parallel with other sectors

Eilís Uí Néill

- The 11+ must be abolished. It distorts the primary school curriculum and disadvantages the IM sector. Although progress has been made with CCEA the paper doesn't have sufficient regard for pupils' level of understanding of Irish language

Aedín Ní Ghadhra

- New system must give full recognition to the IM sector

Pupil Profiles

- Must be developed in conjunction with the IM sector
- Progress needs to be measured at various stages throughout the primary school
- Profile must provide a holistic view as well as assessment of academic ability

Admissions Criteria

- Provision must be made for an Irish language criterion
- Have concerns about, but no solution to, the tie breaker (proximity)

Collegiates

- In favour of co-operation between schools – will discourage competition
- Proposals won't deliver benefits to IM sector. Increased choice could take pupils away from IM, particularly post-16.
- The valuable influence of older pupils on younger ones would be lost. Other schools couldn't cater for IM education and language skills would be lessened
- Increased opportunities for teaching staff would militate against IM staff and there would be little opportunity for teacher development

Suggested Solutions

- Develop single IM Collegiate embracing all schools offering IM education
- Would need similar administration and support service back up as other collegiates
- Would maximise range of subjects available
- Expertise of teachers could be shared
- Would facilitate teacher/pupil exchange and development of specialisms
- SEN should be mainstreamed within IM education
- Would wish to retain dual membership with maintained schools in local collegiates
- Problems would include geography, although there would be scope for increased use of ICT, segregation from other schools and the development of relationships with FE/HE